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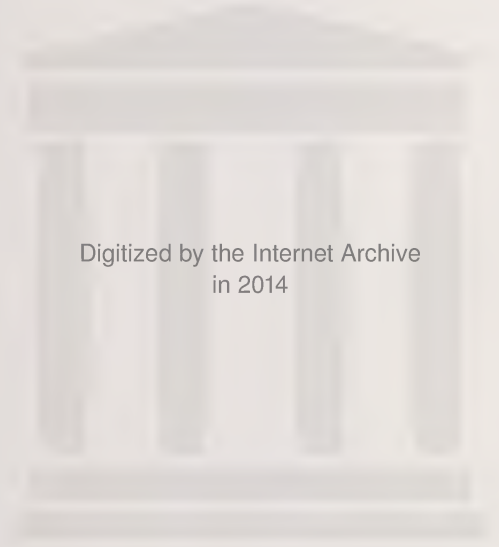
The works of Thomas Jackson,
D. D.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THE WORKS

OF

THOMAS JACKSON, D.D.

SOMETIME

PRESIDENT OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
AND DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH.

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PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

COMMENTARIES UPON THE CREED.

BOOK XI. CONTINUED.

SECTION VI.

A Transition of the Publisher's. [*edit.* 1657.]

WE have by God's good blessing dispatched the main of this book, the five first sections; so many commentaries or expositions of such points or articles of Christian faith as are most proper (by way of dread and terror) to awake the conscience and stir the affections; to persuade men to reflect seriously upon all their actions or omissions, failings or achievements; and to prepare themselves for that account which must shortly be rendered to God the Judge of all, who will respect no persons, nor endure pretences. If these have their kindly perfect work, they will produce, judging ourselves, to prevent the judgment of the Lord, repentance, and restitution of all things; circumspect walking for the future, and passing the remnant of our pilgrimage here in fear.

To enrich the volume, and to benefit the reader, I have thought good to annex this sixth section, which is a collection of such sermons of this author's, as I conceive likely to prove most effectual to the ends above mentioned; and be most proper, not only for this place in the body of his works, but for these times also; which may perhaps be startled, to see their present sins so flagrantly reproved many years ago by one who knew not any of their persons that commit them.

Our great author had in his eighth book and third chapter sadly complained of some, that made this great rule of charity,

equity, and justice, *Do as you would be done unto*—this law of nature and precept of our lawgiver—a nose of wax, a very Lesbian leaden rule.

He had more sadly complained in his tenth book, chapter 23, That not only the practice of this transcendent rule was extinct amongst men, but that the very sense of it was (if not utterly lost among the learned, casuists or expositors, yet) most shamefully decocted, and piteously shrunk up, for want of improving and deducing it into several pipes and branches of good life.

Lastly, in the 29th chapter of this book, amongst other useful things concerning this rule, he told us, That God would judge the world by it.

So then this next discourse (I mean the three sermons upon this text) comes not in unseasonably; and I hope the next but one will follow this as suitably as a silver thread can follow a needle of gold. And I shall endeavour to pick, choose, and so place the rest, that the reader shall not deny their consequency to the five precedent sections, treating of Christ's power to raise the dead, to judge the quick and dead, and finally to sentence both, according to the things done in the body, be they good or bad. At which day, God send this present sinful generation (and amongst them my soul) a good deliverance; and in order thereto, a timely unfeigned repentance, especially of their applauded and avowed transgressions. This for Jesus' sake, who is our ransom, would be our peace, and shall be our Judge. Amen.

The first Sermon upon this Text. 606

CHAP. XXXII.

MATT. VII. 12.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Prov. xx. 22. *Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.*

Prov. xxiv. 29. *Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.*

The misery of man, of the wisest of men, in their pilgrimage to be wanderers too. The short way to happiness. The pearl of the ocean, the epitome, essence, spirits of the law and prophets, Do as you would be done unto. *The coherence. The method. Christ advanceth this dictate of nature into an evangelical law; fortifies it, and gives us proper motives to practise it. Two grounds of equity in this law;* 1. *Actual equality of all men by nature;* 2. *Possible equality of all men in condition. Exceptions against the rule. Answers to those exceptions. This rule forbids not to wage or invoke law, so it be done with charity. Whether nature alone bind us to do good to our enemies. God hath right to command us to love them. Plato's good communion. The compendious way to do ourselves most good is to do as much good as we can to others. The application.*

The misery and mistakes of man.

It is, whether thou list to term it *a folly* or *a calamity*, incident to all sorts of men, that, when they take a perfect survey of all their former courses, they find their wanderings and digressions far larger than their direct proceedings. The more excellent the end is whereat we aim, the greater (commonly) is our error, the more our by-paths from the right way that leads unto it; because the greatest good is always hardest to come by. Thus, such as hunt most eagerly after the knowledge of best matters (seeing the best are

worst to find) after nature's glass is almost run out, and most of their spirits spent; whilst they look back upon their former labours, like weary passengers, that have wandered up and down in unknown coasts without a guide, desirous to see the way they missed, in a map, when they come to their journey's end, begin to discern what toil and pains they might have saved, had they been acquainted with such good rules and directions at the first as now they know. Nor have we so great cause to be ashamed of our folly, as to bewail the common misery of our nature, seeing the wisest among the sons of men either for civil knowledge or speculative learning, Solomon himself, had almost lost himself in this maze; never finding any other issue of his tedious
607 course but only this, *All is vanity and vexation of spirit;* until he had almost come to the end of his days; then he found out that short compendious way
The short or sum of man's duty. of godly life, Eccles. xii. 13; *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.* In this is contained all we seek.

2. Had Solomon in his younger days fixed his eyes upon this rule which he hath left us, as the mariner doth his upon the pole or other celestial sign, he might have arrived in half that time at that haven which he hardly reached in his old age, after continual danger of shipwreck by his wandering to and fro.

But, howsoever this fear of God, and our observation of his commandments, be the readiest, the safest, and the shortest cut that Solomon knew unto that true happiness which all men seek, but most seek amiss; yet these commandments cannot be kept unless they be known; and known they cannot be without good study and industry either in reading or hearing the word of life. The life of man is short, and the text of the law wherein the precepts are contained is long: the com-

mentaries of the prophets and sacred histories necessary for the exposition thereof are voluminous and large: the true sense or meaning of either, in some points, not easy to be found out, unless we be well instructed how to seek it; so as what the Jesuit saith absolutely but falsely of all scripture is comparatively true of this advice of Solomon: 'It is a plain and easy way, a light of man's life, after it be once well learned; but it is hard to learn without a good guide to direct us.' Wherefore behold a greater than Solomon, Christ Jesus himself, directs us, in one, and that a very short line, unto that point whereunto the large discourses both of the law and the prophets do as it were by the circumference lead us: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets:* that is, the sum of the law and the prophets is contained in this short rule.

3. Because our Saviour gives it, we may believe it, that this is the best epitome that ever was given of any so large a work; or rather, not an epitome of the law and the prophets, but the whole substance or essence of the law and the prophets. Herein all their particular admonitions are contained, as branches in their root. Out of the practice of this principle or precept all the righteousness which the law and the prophets do teach will sooner spring, and flourish much better, than if we should turn over all the learned comments that have been written upon them, without the practice of this compendious rule.

This abridgement is a document of his art that could draw a camel through the eye of a needle, that spake as never man spake.

Sure then if any place of scripture, besides those which contain the very foundation of Christian faith, as Christ's incarnation, passion, or resurrection, be more necessary to be learned than other, then is this

most necessary and most worthy the practice: seeing all doctrines of good life, of honest and upright conversation, are derived hence, as particular conclusions in arts and sciences from their causes and principles.

4. For any coherence of these words with any precedent or consequent, we need not be solicitous. It sufficeth to know, they are a principal part of our Saviour's sermon upon the mount; in which he delivered the true meaning of the fundamental parts of the law, purging the text from the corrupt glosses of the scribes and Pharisees. Every sentence therein is a maxim
608 of life, and as it were an entire complete body of itself, not a limb or member of any other particular discourse. Every full sentence of it, this main rule especially, may be anatomized by itself, without unripping any other adjoining. For which reason, some learned have thought, that St. Matthew was not curious to relate every sentence in that rank and order as it came from our Saviour's mouth: but set them down, as any one would do all the memorable good sentences he could call to mind, (of a good discourse read or heard,) placing that perhaps first which was spoke last, or that last which was spoke in the midst.

The coherence.

Yet if (as in description of shires, men usually annex some parts of the bordering countries) any desire to have the particular words or speeches of our Saviour, whereunto this illative *therefore* is to be referred; he must look back unto the fifth chapter of this Gospel, ver. 42: *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.* For so St. Luke (who is more observant of our Saviour's method in this sermon than St. Matthew) in the sixth chapter of his Gospel, vv. 30, 31, couples these two sentences together, which St. Matthew had set so far asunder. And immediately after the words of the text he infers by arguments that duty of loving our

enemies, (which he had set down the precept for before, ver. 27,) though St. Matthew place both duty and argument immediately after the sentence before cited, viz. *Give to him that asketh*, &c., so that this precept, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you*, &c., as is most probable, came in between the matter of that 42d and 43d verse of that fifth chapter.

And yet it might be repeated again in the latter end of that sermon by our Saviour: at least, for some special use or reason placed there by St. Matthew: because, being the foundation or principle whence all other duties of good life are derived, it seems the evangelist would intimate thus much unto us, that of all our Saviour's sermon, which contained the very quintessence of the law, this was the sum; and for this reason he adds that testimony (concerning the excellency of this rule) which St. Luke omits, namely, *That in it is contained the law and the prophets.*

The author's method.

5. The method which I purpose by God's assistance to observe is this:

First, To set down the truth and equity of the rule itself, *Whatsoever ye would that men* &c., with the grounds or motives to the practice thereof.

Secondly, To shew in what sense or how far the observation of it is the fulfilling of the law and the prophets' doctrine; with such exceptions as may be brought against it.

Thirdly, Of the means and method of putting this rule in practice.

It was a saying of the father of physicians, *Natura est medica;* Let physicians do what they can, nature must effect the cure. The physician may either strengthen nature when it is feeble, or ease it from the oppression of humours; but nature must work the cure.

This is in proportion true for matters of morality or good life. *Natura est optima magistra;* all that

the best teachers can perform in natural or moral knowledge, is but to help or cherish those natural notions or seeds of truth and goodness which are ingrafted in our souls. Art doth not infuse or pour in, but rather ripen and draw out, that which lay hid before. And it is the skill of every instructer to apply
609 himself to every man's nature, and to begin with such truths as every one can easily assent unto, as soon as he hears them; albeit without help of a teacher he could not have found them out himself. And yet the more easily we assent to any truth, the less we perceive how we were moved thereto: and the less we perceive it, the more ready we are to imagine that we did more than half move ourselves, or that we could have found out that by ourselves which we have learned of others. Whereas in truth there is nothing more hard than to speak to the purpose, and yet so (in matters of morality and good life) as every man of ordinary capacity shall think, upon the hearing of it, that he could have invented or said the like.

> . . . . . ut sibi quivis
> Speret idem, sudet multum, frustraque laboret
> Ausus idem . . . . . *Hor.* De Arte Poet. 240.

This, as the great rhetorician saith, is the surest token of a perfect orator.

6. For this reason, he that knew what was in man better than man did what was in himself, he that spake as never man spake, and taught as never man taught, doth ground his doctrine of good life and manners upon such evident principles as his very adversaries could not deny, (whereunto any civil natural man would assent, albeit he could not have found them out;) and illustrates it by such plain and natural similitudes as every man of ordinary capacity might conceive. As here in this place; this rule itself—*Whatsoever ye would* &c.—is a principle of nature;

at least the negative of it, *Quod tibi fieri non vis alteri ne feceris*, is so.

The use or consequence of the rule, though, that to observe this should be the fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets, none could have drawn, unless our Saviour had first told us so. And yet the deduction or derivation of all moral precepts (as I hope will appear) is easy to find, since he hath taught us to seek it. Seeing then he that spake as never man spake, and taught as never man taught, doth ground his doctrine upon such principles as were in us by nature; I shall take leave to imitate Him, (*quantum, Deum mortalis possum,*) and to shew the equity and truth of this precept; first, as it binds us by Nature; and secondly, as it binds us in Christianity. Or first, as far as the equity of it may be gathered by natural reason; then, secondly, as it is set down in holy scripture.

7. That this is a dictate of the law of nature is evident from the confession of the heathen and mere natural men. Severus the emperor, albeit no Christian, yet, as some report of him, did like best of the Christians for their good life, because they most practised this rule; and the negative of it, 'What you would not have others do unto you, do not you to them,' seemed such an excellent ground of civil justice and honest dealing, that he caused it to be written in the places of civil justice or courts of judgment, as we do the sentences of the law or commandments in our churches; which he would not have done, (or should have done to small purpose,) unless he had known the rule had been written before in every man's heart, so men would look into them. And such amongst us (I am persuaded) as know not whether this sentence be in the law of God or in the gospel of Christ, or no; or such as little think whether it be there or no, if they see one insult over another in distress, deal hardly with a

stranger, or laugh at another's misery, or the like, will naturally use this or the like reason to dissuade him: 610 'If you were in their case, you would not be well pleased with this usage; *Do* (in God's name) *as you would be done unto.*' The force of which and other like reasons is grounded upon this rule or principle of nature. Nor is there any man that hath (as we say) any good nature in him, albeit ignorant in most points of religion, but will in his sober mood be much moved with such reproofs; and however he may seem little to be affected with them whilst he is in the heat of passion, yet his own conscience, after his passion ceaseth, will secretly condemn him for so doing.

Two grounds of this rule, or law of nature.

8. The grounds of equity in this rule are two, though the one be subordinate to the other:

First, The actual equality of nature in all men: for though there be difference or distinction of men by place, preeminence, or dignity; yet in nature all men are equal, all alike subject to corruption and calamity.

Secondly, The possible equality of condition amongst all men. For seeing the best men are but men, what is one man's case may be another's, because his nature, much more his estate or condition, is subject to change. No prince was ever so firmly established in his throne, but might be pulled down thence to lie with beggars in the dust. Ancient times yielding more frequent examples of the circumrotation of this sphere or wheel of mutability, their observations to this purpose were rife: *Quod cuiquam contigit, cuivis potest;* "Whatsoever hath befallen any man, good or bad, might befall any one of all."

Et subito est Irus, qui modo Crœsus erat.

One turn (as the heathens would have said) of Fortune's wheel might raise up beggars or servants to the throne, and bring down monarchs to the dust.

From this actual equality of all men by nature, and

this possible equality of all men in condition, was it, that even among the heathen he was thought inhuman, no natural man, but a monster, that would not be affected with another's extraordinary misery.

The former of these two (in natures not extremely depraved) doth work a sympathy or fellowfeeling of others' misery; and the latter, that is, possibility of suffering the like, doth work fear of doing the evil intended, or penitency after it be done. Likeness or identity of nature causeth sympathy or fellowfeeling in brute beasts: if one pant for grief, others of the same kind will be affected with it. Ignorant and simple men do many things by instinct of nature, whereof philosophers only know the reason. And even in such as did not expressly know this rule, nature herself did ofttimes work, and shew by the effects that it was hidden in their hearts.

Thus Cyrus, when he had condemned Crœsus his conquered enemy to be burnt, only calling to mind what a potent prince he had lately been, and as unlikely to have come to that end as himself was before the victory gotten, was afraid (as the historian notes) lest some like plague might have come upon himself; and so, pitying himself rather than the other, he recalled the sentence.

From the same reason did that noble Roman[a] weep amain, when he saw Carthage, the enemy city of Rome, set on fire, though by the senate's decree: as if he could have wished that her flames might have been quenched with his and other Romans' tears. The present calamity of that late famous and mighty city put him in mind, that Rome herself, though then sitting as a queen that knew no sorrow, might one day 611
be as bright with fire as for the present she was with glory. Yet was the difference betwixt Cyrus and

[a] Scipio.

Crœsus's estate as great, betwixt Rome and Carthage greater, than can ordinarily be found between man and man, Cyrus was conqueror, and had gotten the strength of a mighty kingdom to his former by his enemy's fall. And Rome had never the like occasion to be secure as she had by Carthage's destruction, which standing would never suffer her to be quiet, being the only city of all the world that was able to give her check.

Thus, could we but consider, that whosoever we be, we be but men; whatsoever our estate be, it is but human, subject to chance, and obnoxious to change; nature would tell us, that whatsoever is evil whilst done unto us, is evil also to be done to others: and seeing there is no evil which we can do to others but the like may be done unto us, we should be as unwilling to do any evil at all to others as we are to have any done to us. For nature itself doth (as it were of course) suggest a fear of being done to as men have done to others. Hence springs that negative precept, *Quod tibi fieri non vis alteri ne feceris.*

Again, whatsoever is good whilst it is done to us, the same is good whilst done to others in like case; nay, as good to them as unto us. And seeing all good is to be desired, we should be as desirous to do good to others as to have good done to ourselves. Yea, seeing, according to the mind of Christ, *Beatius est dare quam accipere*, Acts xx. 35, to do good is better than to have good done to us, (as every action is better than passion,) we should therefore be more desirous of that. And hence riseth the affirmative precept, *Do as you would be done to.*

Even the heathen knew that it was better to give than to take:

Quas dederis solas semper habebis opes:

it was more to have a conscience fraught with the memory of good turns done, or benefits bestowed on

others, than to have store of possessions or goods, and yet therewith to do little or no good.

9. Yet are not these two rules so plain and evident unto natural reason, but natural passion and self-love will find exceptions against them. Exceptions against these two rules.

There is no man will deny that these rules were very good in the old world, or golden age; or that they be good now, if all men would be content to observe them alike. But he shall be sure to live by the loss that resolves to do better to any others than it is likely any will do to him. Nay, many in their heat of discontent at others' bad usage of them will not stick quite to invert this rule, and think that it is just and right, at least no wrong, to use others as they have been used themselves. (Thus I have known some use more severity towards their inferiors, than did well agree with their natural disposition, only because they had been severely used by others whilst they were inferiors.) And this they think not amiss, so they do it with no ill mind, but only because they would not be the only men that should be noted and marked as fit to suffer abuse and wrongs whilst their equals go scot-free. Thus sundry, shut up from others by reason of infection, have sought to infect others, only because they would have companions in their miseries, albeit it was not man, but God, that brought that bodily evil upon them. And thus many rude and barbarous beggars, (being denied harbour or relief of such as might afford it them,) through a conceit of their own forlorn estate, will seek to make others as poor or more miserable than themselves, only that they may have some to be their equals or inferiors.

The like suggestions of evil and wrong in some 612
degree or other will every man's passions present unto his thoughts; yet whoso is but naturally wise, either will not hear them, or (if this be too hard to

put them off, because passion is so familiar and intimate with the soul) will not give sentence until he have heard reason speak, which would oppose him thus:

The answer to the former exceptions.

10. When thou wast hardly and despitefully used by others, (suppose abused in person, disgraced in speech, or endamaged in goods, &c.,) did they well or ill that so did use thee? If well, why wast thou moved therewith? why dost thou complain? or rather why wouldest thou not be so well used again? If evil they did, why seekest thou then to imitate them in the evil which thou hatest? for if it were evil in them whilst it was done to thee, then will it be evil in thee whilst thou dost the like to others; yea, perhaps much worse in thee, because thou having suffered the like wrong before, thou better knowest what an heinous fact it is to do the like. For none knows, none possibly can know, so well what a grievous sin oppression is, as he that hath been violently oppressed by others. None can so distinctly perceive what an odious offence slander, defamation, or scurrility is, as he that hath been scourged by scurrilous tongues, or wronged in his good name by false accusers, sly informers, or envious whisperers. Generally, the nature and quality of all evil that happens to one man from another is much better known by suffering than by doing it. For he that does it first, perhaps scarce knows well what he doth; he sees the nature of it but (as it were) afar off; but he that suffers it, feels it at hand, and knows it by experience.

Now the greater we know any evil to be, and the more feeling touch we have of the nature and quality of it, the more grievous is our sin, if we practise the like. Wherefore he that hath been most hardly dealt withal, sins most, if he deal so with others; for he doth that to others which he is most unwilling should be done unto himself; because he best knows the

smart of the evil, and according to his unwillingness of having the like done to himself; will the smart of the sting of conscience be for doing so to others.

Some, perhaps, or some men's passions, would here reply, 'These reasons hold true, if we should so use them that never did us wrong as others have wrongfully used us; but if the party that used us ill come in our way, we do him but right, if we use him just so as he hath used us; for justice itself consists in equality; εἴκε πάθοι ταδ' ἔρεξα δίκη ἰθεῖα γένοιτο; and if we pay him but in the same measure that he did mete to us, he is justly dealt withal.'

It is true, indeed; he is but justly dealt withal; because he is but done to as he had done to others. So a thief or murderer is but justly dealt withal if he be hanged; yet if every man that hath his goods stolen should do this, which is but right, unto a thief; or if every man that hath his friend or brother slain should but do that which is due and should be done unto a murderer, not expecting the judge's sentence, both might do themselves great wrong, in doing that which was but right and due to the offenders respectively. And so shall every one wrong his own soul and conscience that will prevent Him in his judgments *to whom vengeance belongeth*, (by taking revenge into his own hands); and not expect his good leisure, by lawful and public means.

The law of nature is, Do as thou wouldest be done to; not as thou hast been done to against thy will. For whatsoever was evil in another whilst done to 613
thee, is evil in thee whilst thou dost the same to him. Thy fact is as his fact; and thy sin as his sin; the evil is one and the same. Only thou mayest allege that he was more prone to do the same evil, because he did it without provocation, and thou dost it provoked: that is as much as to say, he hath overcome

thee in evil; but thou also art overcome of evil; the evil hath overcome that which is good in thee, thy passion overbears thy reason and judgment: which is such an offence against the law of nature as it would be against the law of this land if a tumultuous multitude should take the laws (as we say) into their own hand, and execute malefactors without the judge's or magistrate's consent.

11. 'What, then, (will some say,) shall I pocket up every wrong? shall I make myself a butt or mark for all to shoot at? shall I prostitute my person to abuse, my good name to slander, my goods to spoil without redress?' God forbid! For vengeance is God's, and he will repay; and he hath powers on earth which bear not the sword in vain. If it be an open injury, by whose example if it should go unpunished others might be emboldened to do the like, and if the present offendant might thereby grow insolent or retchless, likely to do the like again to others as well as to thee, thou dost no way transgress, rather two ways observe this rule of nature's law, if thou solicit his chastisement at the lawful magistrate's hand. First, thou shalt teach the offender the practice of this rule, which before he knew not, or neglected, though bound thereto as well as thou. For when the magistrate shall inflict upon him such punishment as shall be more grievous to him than the wrong that he did was to thee, he will be as careful to avoid the doing, as thou art to avoid the suffering of the same or like injury. This is the rule of public punishments, that they should always be such as the party offending would be as unwilling to suffer, as the party offended is to endure the wrong. Secondly, seeing all men naturally desire security from danger, loss, or disquietness, and for this end wish that all private disturbers of public peace might either be amended or cut off; thou shalt

More exceptions against that rule, and answers to them.

do to others (whom thou hast more reason to respect than the party offending) as thou wouldest desire they should do for thee in the like case, if thou seek for justice at the public magistrate's hand, whose duty it is to provide for all men's security and peace. Yea, though perhaps thou do to this man offending as thou wouldest not be done to in like case, yet shalt thou do to a great many others—to all honest men—as thou wouldest that they should do to thee in the like case.

This rule must be understood of a regulated will.

Thou canst not but consider that other men's cases may be thine own, and couldest be willing, that if they had the like occasion of complaint, and could make legal proof of wrong done, they should prosecute their cause, for thine and others' security from the like. For these ends and purposes, to prosecute any injury done by any private person before a public magistrate, or wrongs done by an inferior magistrate before his lawful superior, is but just and right, a duty whereunto we are bound by the law of nature, if the party offending be insolent and stubborn, likely to hold on his wonted course unless restrained by the magistrate. But if the offence be private betwixt thee and thy neighbour, not likely to redound to any further public harm; if it was an offence of infirmity, or proceeded from some natural unruly passion, for which he is afterwards heartily sorry; then thou art bound in conscience to remit it. For if thou considerest thine own infirmities, thou canst not but find thyself obnoxious to like passions, and that thou mayest at one time or other be as far overseen, and 614
yet couldest wish in thine heart that such thine escapes or oversights should not be prosecuted to the uttermost, but rather be pardoned upon submission or penitency. And experience doth teach us, that such as are too rigid or austere censurers of other men's

Rigid censuring a prognostic of falling.

infirmities, do ofttimes fall into the like, or worse, themselves; even into such as they are otherwise least inclined unto (but in that they are men, the sons of sinful Adam, they are in some degree or other inclined unto any evil); and therefore, whilst they prosecute such as upon infirmity or passion fall into some enormous crime, as if they were not men but monsters, or noxious creatures of another kind, their judgment is just, if they themselves fall into the like, that they may know themselves to be but men, not altogether free from passion and infirmities. *Vide interpretes in* 7 *cap. S. Matthæi,* v. 1. See Pliny's Epist. lib. 9. epist. 12.

Q. if nature alone bind men to do good to their enemies ?

12. Thus far natural reason may lead us in our sober thoughts, that we should not do any harm to others, because we would not have any other do harm to us; or that we should forbear to prosecute the infirmities of others, because we would have others bear with our own. But yet if we consult nature alone, it may seem doubtful whether a man be bound by her laws to do good unto his enemy; as, to relieve him in distress, to defend him in danger, or the like : this rule of nature may seem not to bind men hereunto. For many men ofttimes would choose to suffer great loss, rather than to be beholden to their enemy; sometimes rather to starve for hunger, than to be upbraided with his benevolence; or to incur evident danger of death, rather than it should be said that his deadly enemy had preserved his life. He that is thus minded—the savage and giant-like spirit would say *bravely minded*—may in the jollity of his resolution think himself no way bound to do his enemy any good, of whom he looks for none; nay, of whom he would receive none, though it should be thrust upon him. Yet natural reason and conscience (so this man would hear them

speak, and abide their censure) would condemn him, if he refused to do good unto his enemy. The rule is misapplied by passion; for nature and reason bid us that we should do that to every man which we would have any man do for us; not to do that to this or that man which we expect from them alone. Now there is no man so wilful, unless he be witless also, but would be relieved in distress, delivered from danger, and warranted from loss, albeit not by this or that man whom he disliketh, yet by some one or other whom he likes better. Wherefore, seeing reason teacheth us, that to do good to others, as they are men, is good in itself, it teacheth us (so we would learn of it) to do good unto whomsoever. For why should enmity (or our enemy) hinder us from doing that which our consciences approve for good. If thy enemy be of that strange temper above described, and one that would scorn to be beholden to thee; steal thy good in upon him, and do him good so as that he shall not know from whom it came. Thou art bound to minister comfort to him, as a compassionate and cunning physician doth physic to a melancholic or distempered patient. But thou wilt say, 'So I shall lose all my thanks for all my pains and cost.' I answer by asking thee, 'Is the honour (or thanks) that cometh from God alone of no value?' The heathen could say to his friend, "We are each to other *theatrum satis amplum*," a theatre sufficiently large for matter of content and contemplation. By doing so, thou shalt be sure to gain the testimony of a good conscience. And herein thou mayest justly triumph over thine enemy, in that thou art better aminded towards him than thou couldest expect that he would be towards thee. These are the best terms of comparison that thou canst stand upon with thine enemy, if thou canst truly say that

thou art a better man than he: and if the mind be the man, then he is truly and properly said to be the better man that is better aminded towards all men, inasmuch as they are men. This is the perfection and goodness of men as they are civil and natural men: and this is that law of nature, which St. Paul saith, Rom. ii. 14, 15, was written in the Gentiles' hearts: *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law,* that is, not the written law of God, *do by nature the things of the law,* (or contained in the law,) *these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew* the effects of *the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.*

13. But, however the heathen had this fundamental law of nature, this root of righteousness, (as without offence I hope I may term it, because it was a relic of God's image in them,) with many branches of it, engrafted in their hearts; yet, as their consciences might acquit them for performing many particular duties which it enjoined, so might they accuse them for negligence in more.

For neither did they practise so much as they knew to be good, nor did they know all that to be good which this rule might have taught them to be such. And albeit the better sort of them will rise up in judgment against us, and may condemn even the best sort of Christians (as the world counts them) now living; yet most of them we may suppose (especially in later times) were as negligent hearers of nature's lore, as we are of the doctrine of grace. God, as the apostle saith, Rom. i, had given some of them over to a reprobate sense, that, seeing they would not practise what they knew for good, they should not know good from bad. And as the learned observe, when

mankind had, like wretchless unthrifts, corrupted their ways, and like ungrateful tenants to their landlord, or undutiful subjects to their prince, had cancelled the original instruments of their inheritance, or copy of that law by which they were to be tried, daily defacing and blotting it by their foul transgressions and stain of sins; it pleased the Lord in mercy to renew it once again in visible and material characters, engraven in stone, adding to it the commentaries of prophets and other holy men, that so his people might once again copy out that covenant whose original they had lost, (the written law being but as the sampler or drawn work which was to have been wrought out by the law of nature,) and imprint it again in their hearts by meditation and practice. Yet once again the people of the Jews (unto whom this written law was committed) did by their false interpretations and hypocritical glosses corrupt the true sense and meaning of God's law, as the nations before had defaced the law of nature by their foolish imaginations and conceited self-love. Nevertheless, as sin did abound in man, so did God's grace and favour superabound. For when both the law of nature was almost wholly lost among the Gentiles, (drowned in Gentilism, as the Latin tongue is in the Italian,) and the Jews (who should have allured others by their good example and continual prosperity—had they continued faithful in observing it—to observe the written law of God) had quite corrupted it; God sent his only Son in the nature of man and form of a servant, by infusion of grace into men's hearts, to revive the dead root of nature's law, when it was almost perished; and also to purify and cleanse God's written law from the false interpretations of the scribes and Pharisees, which 616
he performs in this seventh chapter and in the two

precedent. So our Saviour saith, chap. v. 17, *Think not that I am come to destroy* (or dissolve) *the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

How Christ fulfilled the law.

But how did Christ come to fulfil the law? Only by his own righteousness and example?

No, not so only; but by proposing unto us the true sense and meaning of the moral law; which all that were to be his followers were to fulfil in a more spiritual and better manner than either the best of the heathens, or the most strict sect of the Jews of that time did. For they had abrogated the force and sense of sundry commandments, and stood more upon the letter than the meaning of the law. Wherefore he adds, verse 20, *I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.* It is evident then, from our Saviour's words, that both the righteousness commanded in the moral law and in the prophets must be fulfilled in better measure by Christians than it was either by the scribes or the Pharisees; and that the best and most easy way of fulfilling both the law and the prophets is the practising of this rule, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*

14. Let us see then what we have more from his doctrine than from nature for the right practice of this royalest rule. By Christ's doctrine we have both the grounds of the former precept (which nature afforded us) better fortified and confirmed unto us, and also have motives or inducements, which may sway reason against passion, to the practice of the same rule, more certain and infinitely greater than the heathen or mere natural man had any. (I must

request you to call to mind what was said before [b], that the ground of this precept was, the equality of all men by nature.) The heathen knew this full well, that all men were of one kind, all mortal, all capable of reason, and consequently of right and wrong. And from this knowledge, even such among them as held no creation, no dependence of man upon the Divine power, did often shew commendable effects of this law written in their hearts, in sundry duties of good neighbourhood (as we speak) and civil kindnesses: as for any affinity, or bonds of society between man and man, at least between men of diverse countries, more than is between beasts of the same kind, most of them acknowledged none; nor did they acknowledge as much affinity betwixt creatures of any kind, as we do that acknowledge all things to have one Creator. Herein then is our equality and affinity greater, that we all acknowledge one God for our Father, who is in a more peculiar sort the Creator of every man, than of any other corruptible creature.

Again, all we Christians acknowledge one Christ for our head, of whose body we are members; hence ariseth another peculiar equality, from the equal price of our redemption, which was all one for the rich and poor, for the little and mighty ones of the earth. This God prefigured in the law, Exod. xxx. 11, 12, 15, *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they*

[b] See §. 8.

give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.

From this strict dependency of all men upon one and the same Creator, and this equality and brotherhood which we have in one Father, doth our Saviour Christ, Luke vi. 36, draw that precept of loving our enemies; which he makes as it were an essential property of all such as truly acknowledge one God; not that all men were not bound thereto, and might have known so much by nature, but that it was a greater shame, and more preposterous sin, in such as did acknowledge one God, not to perform that duty. The consciences of the Gentiles, as St. Paul saith, might secretly accuse them; but the others' words and speeches did bear open testimony against them, if they
617 neglected so to do; so saith our Saviour Christ immediately upon the words of the text, Luke vi. 32—35: *For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.*

15. This further confirms what out of the principles of nature was formerly gathered, to wit, that where it is said, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;* the meaning is not, 'What ye would have this or that man do unto you, do ye so unto the same man;' but rather thus, 'Whatsoever ye would that any man should do unto you, do

ye the like in like case to every man, in that he is man,' in that he is your fellow-creature, in that he is the son of your heavenly Father, be he otherwise friend or foe. Yet further we may—nay we must—enlarge this precept, if we will have the full meaning of it, thus: 'Whatsoever ye would should be done unto you, whether by man, by angel, (or any other of God's ministering spirits or procurer of mankind's good,) or by God himself, that do to every man, because every man hath God to his father, who, as he hath a care and providence over all, so is it his will that every creature under him, all men especially that call him Father, should be his ministers in procuring and furthering any other's good, of whom this our heavenly Father vouchsafes to take care and charge.'

A lively emblem of this duty we have in the ravens' feeding of Elijah, being destitute of all ordinary means of food, if we consider the nature of this bird, none more ravenous, none more greedy of the prey than it; yet because *the Lord feeds the young ravens when they call upon him,* being otherwise destitute of ordinary relief from their dams or old ones, (as both Aristotle and Pliny observe, and the psalmist alludes to it in that speech,) therefore the Lord commanded them to afford the like help to Elias, being forsaken, or rather persecuted by the king and his officers, who should have yielded him house and harbour; and from their example we should learn the practice, to do for others as either the Lord hath done or we expect he should do for us.

Thus much, I say, is fully and directly included in our Saviour's deductions and conclusions drawn from this principal rule, albeit so much be not fully expressed in his words, especially if we observe the Greek phrase only; but the language (whose manner of dialect the

evangelists retain, though writing in the Greek tongue) will very well bear, and our Saviour's words, Luke vi. 36, enforce as much, *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful;* and in Matt. vi. 14 he tells us, that if we look for mercy at God's hand, we must shew mercy unto men; not to our friends or brethren by kindred or nation, but unto men. The place is so much the more worth our observation,
618 because he adds no exposition or comment to any one petition in all the Lord's prayer, save only that he gives this note upon that—*And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us:* his note is this; 'If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you;.....but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, no more will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses.' Wherefore, as we desire God to forgive us our trespasses, though we have been his enemies, so must we be ready to forgive our enemies; and as we desire all good of him, so must we be ready, not only to forgive, but even to do any good to our enemies. If he be our enemy deservedly, we should therefore do him good, that we might make amends for the occasion offered; if our enemy he be without any just occasion given by us, we should consider, that this voluntary enmity in him is the work of Satan; but he himself, as man, is our fellow-creature, the workmanship of God's own hand; *God made him man,* but the devil made him an enemy; and we should seek by all means possible to dissolve the works of Satan, and to repair the handiwork of God; that is, we should love his person, and seek to reform his vice; we should overcome his evil with our good will to him; if he be hungry, we should give him meat; if thirsty, drink; as the apostle commands, Romans xii. 20. In sum, we must

feed him, but seek to starve his humour, by substracting all occasions of exasperating his mind, and seeking occasions to do him good; so the heat of his malice having nothing to work upon will by little and little die, as fire goes out when the fuel fails.

16. For a friend's sake, that has endeared us to him for many, of whom we yet expect more kindnesses, we think it good manners to tolerate many things which otherwise we would not. And shall not Christian faith and true religion teach us much more to remit all for God's sake, of whom we have received ourselves, our very bodies and souls, and all that we have; of whom we yet expect much more than we have received, even everlasting life, and immortal bodies to be crowned with glory? What if our enemies have sought to take away this miserable and mortal life; God freely gave it us, who likewise at his pleasure may justly challenge it. And if we cannot justly complain if he should take it from us, is it an hard precept that he wills us not to revenge, yea not to complain by way of revenge, of such as would but could not take it from us?

The Lord may as justly command us to forbear all desire of revenge, all complaint of such as would take away our life, as he himself can take it.

That they would so have done, was their own, that they could not do so unto us, is the Lord's doing; to whom we owe all thankfulness for preserving it: and this may be the best occasion of shewing our thankfulness, if we for his sake forgive such as sought to take away our lives. Nay, if we would but examine this precept by exact reason, (passion set aside,) inasmuch as God hath freely given us life, he might most justly command us not to murmur against such as should take it from us. For who can appoint him his

time? or who can refuse any for his executioner whom the supreme Judge of heaven and earth shall permit? But inasmuch as God hath preserved our lives, which our enemies sought, he may justly command—and we must obey him so commanding—to do any good unto them that sought our evil. God is a more absolute Lord over the lives of kings and princes than they are over their lands or goods; he hath a more absolute interest in all men's actions and affections than any man hath in his own goods or fruits of his ground. Now what lord or master is there that would endure such a servant as would not bestow his goods or benevolence on whomsoever it pleased him to appoint,
619 albeit he were his servant's enemy? If this we refuse, and yet acknowledge ourselves to be God's servants, may not God justly say unto us, *Ex tuo ipsius ore judicaberis*, if any refuse to set his affections on whomsoever God shall appoint him, to employ his actions for whose good it pleaseth him, albeit he be our open enemy? How much more ought we to do it, if we consider the hope of reward in the life to come!

17. Thus you see the first ground of this precept, drawn from the equality of all men by nature, improved and fortified by the doctrine of faith, that is, by the acknowledgment of one Father and Creator; and yet may it be further confirmed, if we consider what affinity, nay, what consanguinity we all have in Christ, and what he hath done for us.

We are (saith the apostle, if we be Christ's) *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.* Our conjunction with him, (if we be or would be conjoined with him,) although it be spiritual and mystical, yet is it a true, a real and lively conjunction. He is a true and lively Head; we are true and lively members of him, and one of another; and must have as true a fellowfeeling

one of another's harms or sorrows, as one part of our own body hath of the pain of another. No body politic ever on earth, not the most united in place, in laws, customs, or any other bond of civil society whatsoever, had, or can have the like union, or so near conjunction, as all that are members of Christ's mystical body truly have; as all that profess themselves members thereof should in practice testify that they have; otherwise, as the lawyers say, *Protestatio non valet contra factum:* it is in vain to profess thou art a Christian, in vain to protest thou art a true professor or protestant, if thy deeds and resolution, if thy practice do not seal the truth of thy profession or protestation; for not doing this, as the apostle saith, thou shalt confess Christ and Christianity with thy lips, but deny both him and it in thy deeds and in thy practice; and so thou shalt be judged, not according to thy sayings, but according to thy works and resolution, or omissions of working.

Would you know then what some of the heathen have thought of the duties of every member in a body politic? Plato, in his fifth book *De Republica*, hath a comparison to this purpose: 'If a man receive a wound in any part, as in his foot or hand, or have but some pain or grief in his finger, we will not say that his hand or foot is wounded, or that his finger feels pain; but, the man himself hath suffered a wound in his hand or foot; that he himself hath a great pain,' &c. For albeit the pain or grief spring first from this or that part, yet it overflows and affects the whole body; the branches of it spread throughout all parts; and every part is worse, because one part is so ill: yea every part forbears its natural function or recreation in some measure for the ease of this; the head wants its sleep, other parts their rest, by reason of the spirits'

recourse thither, as so many comforters sent from them to visit their sick friend or fellow member. In like manner Plato thought it meet, that in every city or commonweal, as often as any good or harm did happen to any citizen or free denizen thereof, it should not be counted that man's good or harm only, but the good or harm of the whole city; and every member thereof should be alike affected. If this the heathens by mere light of nature could discern to be the duty of the mere natural man, what tongue of man or angel can express, in terms befitting so high a mystery, what brotherhood, what fellowship, what sympathy, and what affection should be between the members of Christ's body? for no society like this; no fellowship
620 like to that in him. This union exceeds all other much more than the union of one part of our heart with another doth the union of the heart with the foot. Doubtless our Saviour spake according to the duty, if not according to the custom of honest hearty neighbours, in the parable of the lost sheep and goat; his rejoicing for the recovery of his strayed sheep was not his alone, but his neighbours' also. Her sorrow for loss of her money was not only hers, but her gossips'; as, after the finding it, her joy was theirs too.

It is worth the consideration—and I beseech you to consider—what a madness it would seem to a wise man, if because the finger did ache or pain him, a man's head or heart and inward thoughts should presently resolve to cut it off, or vex it more because it did vex them. Yet such is our malice and madness, if, because our brother or fellow member in Christ (so we must account all that communicate with us in the same sacraments) doth vex or torment us, we should therefore resolve to vex and torment him again. This

is a symptom of such hellish phrensy as the poet describes;

> Ipse suos artus lacero divellere morsu
> Certat.

As monstrous and pitiful a spectacle to the eyes of faith, as it would be to the eyes of the body, to see, as we have heard of some, (hanged quick in irons,) ready to starve for hunger, and destitute of hopes of other food, to eat the flesh of their arms to satisfy their gnawing entrails. So monstrous is their sin, so miserable their estate, that to satiate their revengeful minds, or to wreak their imbred spite, do harm, vex, or torment their fellow members in Christ. *If ye bite and devour one another*, (saith the apostle, Gal. v. 15,) *take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.* His meaning is, 'Whosoever doth vex or harm his brother shall feel the smart of it himself one time or other, as certainly as the heart or soul that wounds or cuts an outward member shall feel the smart or want of it.' And again, that whosoever yields any comfort to his distressed or comfortless brother shall as certainly be partaker of the good he does to him, as the heart which directs, or the hand which applies the medicine to any ill-affected part, shall find ease and rest by the mitigation of the sickly member's pain.

18. Would you then know the most certain compendious way to do yourselves most good? Seek, as far as in you lies, to do good to all other men; seek not your own good so much as the good of others; or rather, seek your own good especially by the means of doing good to others. Consider, that there is *a great reward* promised to such as do good to others; but there is no promise made for doing good to ourselves. If we seek to enrich ourselves, or advance our estate, we have our reward if we obtain riches or advance-

ment; but if we relieve those that be in necessity, if we assist or direct into good ways those that for want of means may be tempted to ill courses, to this double good work (which both relieves the body and rescues the soul) there is appointed a great reward. There is a reward promised to such as relieve the poor; none to such as enrich themselves. There is a reward promised to such as comfort the brokenhearted; none to such as solace themselves with mirth, and pass their time in pleasures. There is a reward for those that raise up them that fall; none to them that, being in competent estate, seek to advance themselves. If such as seek riches get riches, if such as seek advancement get advancement, *verily they have their full reward;* but if they get or seek it to the prejudice of their poor brethren, their sin is grievous; and our Saviour Christ
621 pronounceth a woe unto them, Luke vi. 24: *Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.* Is this the condition of all such as be rich? No; but of such rich ones as regard not (understand not) the poor; of such as seek to enrich themselves more than to relieve others. *Woe unto you that are full!* to wit, when others are hungry, and you give them not to eat. *Woe unto you that laugh!* to wit, in time of public calamity and woe, when you should mourn with your brethren that do mourn; for thus not doing unto them as you would be done unto in the like case, God shall do that to you which you would not, and give them their heart's desire; God will turn their mourning into joy, and your laughter into tears.

A false balance, saith Solomon, *is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight.* Prov. xi. 1. Now to be more desirous to do good to ourselves than to others, is, as it were, to buy with a greater measure and sell with a less; for even this practice were no

cozenage in hucksters and marketers, unless the balance of their hearts and minds were unequally set before, that is, unless the measure of their desire of private gain were greater than their desire of doing good to others.

This is the point wherein their own beam differs from or disagrees with God's balance hung up in their consciences—*Love thy neighbour as thyself. Do as you would be done unto.* God, that trieth the very heart and reins, doth weigh all our secret thoughts more exactly and curiously than we would weigh gold; and by how much we are more desirous to receive good from others than to do them good, so much more shall we want of our heart's desire.

This is the second point wherein the doctrine of grace exceeds the law of nature.

The heathen had a surmise or fear that some like evil might befall them as they had done to others; yet was not their expectation of punishment so certain, but they thought it might be, and often was, prevented with policy; or if they escaped unpunished in this life, they thought themselves safe enough; whereas we certainly know and believe that God will certainly bring all to equality; and it shall go worst with them that go unpunished in this life; for usually his punishments in this life bring men as it were to a composition with their adversaries, both teaching them to do as they would be done unto, and to repent for the wrongs they have committed; but such as pass this life unpunished and impenitent are arrested at their first entry into the other; they fall immediately into the jailor's hands, from whence there is no redemption.

19. Thus much of the first point, (according to the

method proposed §. 5: see above, p. 7,) that is, of the equity of the precept, and of the grounds or motives which might incite us to the performance of it, either drawn from the law of nature, or from the law of grace, the holy gospel.

Of the second point (that is, in what sense the observation of it is the fulfilling the law and prophets, or how the command itself contains the sum of the law and prophets) afterward.

The application. Here, only for a ground to application, I take it as granted, that natural reason and the written law teach every man what is good for himself, and whereon to set his desires. And this rule of nature and precept of our Saviour binds every man to further his neighbour or fellow-creature in all such desires, that is, generally in all desires which pertain either unto the necessary supplies or comforts of this life, or to the hopes and means of attaining the life to come.

622 Unto what part of the affirmative precept it is most requisite I should exhort you, or from what part of the negative I should dissuade you, I cannot tell; because I am ignorant in what part of the one you are defective, or in what part of the other you most exceed. In both, no doubt, we all offend; both in not doing to others (in sundry cases) as we desire it should be done to us, and also in doing that to others which we would not have them do to us.

Two especial breaches of this law of nature I have observed, (so far as my experience reacheth,) and have heard noted by others, to be almost general throughout the land.

The one, in not affording our distressed brethren that comfort for the support of this life which in their case we would desire.

The other, in procuring their undoing or grievous loss by our greedy desires of enlarging our own estates, advancing ourselves, or increasing our wealth and commodity.

For the first, None of us can be ignorant, how, in our times, sometimes the famine, ofttimes, nay always, for this seven or eight years past, the plague of pestilence, hath raged one where or other throughout the land. The grievousness of that malady albeit we know not fully, yet that we know it in some sort, and esteem of it as a grievous malady, a plague indeed sent from God, our fear of it when it is near unto us doth sufficiently witness; and from the measure of our own fear or care to avoid it, we may gather how desirous we would be of any comfort if it should seize upon us; of any comfort, I say, either bodily to ease the pain by lenitives, or to prevent the last danger of it by physic and good diet; or if in these we could have no hope, the less we had in them, the more desirous would we be of spiritual comfort under the wings of the Almighty. The less help art or nature or men themselves could afford us, the more earnestly would we desire hearty prayers for succour and comfort from the Almighty. It would much strengthen our faith and hope to know that others did join with us in fervent prayers for mercy; and it would much lessen our bodily grief and discontent of mind to know that they did bear a part with us; it would abate our sorrow to know that they did abate their wonted mirth and jollity as in compassion to us. The saying is most true;

Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris;

but the solace is most comfortable, when men do willingly, and not by constraint, share with us in our misery; for then they take as it were part of our

burden from us, and put it upon their own shoulders; so as that which is most heavy and grievous whilst it is only laid upon one or some few, becomes very light and easy when it is divided and laid upon many willing to communicate in the burden.

These and many like but more effectual arguments all of us could plead for ourselves, if we were in this or any other kind of misery. But who is he of a thousand that would lay half of this to heart when sorrow lies heaviest upon his poor distressed brethren? I know not how men in this place are affected; but elsewhere, for the most part, if they be so mindful of their distressed brethren as to relieve their wants and furnish them with the necessaries of this life, they think it almost a work of supererogation; and if they should not be commended for it at first, they would be more slack to do the like again.

But that they should afflict or pinch themselves for others' penury, that they should abate their ordinary mirth for others' sorrow, is an ungrateful doctrine, almost a point of puritanism. Or if some be thus
623 well-minded towards their neighbours or allies, they think they have sufficiently discharged their duty; they think this precept of our Saviour extends itself no further than the statutes of the land, binding them to do good (such good as they would have done to them) only to the men of their own or the next parish. As for the miseries of such as are afar off, the sound of them enters not into their ears; their sighs and groans move not their hearts.

If we should tell the people of one shire or country that they ought to mourn and lament, to fast and pray for the afflictions of others some forty miles off, or in the utmost confines of another country in this realm, they would be ready, I am afraid, to laugh at

our folly, and count us as uncivil as any voluntary disturbers of their sports. But here I trust I may be bold to say as much as the Lord hath said, whose word requires at least as much—I think much more—than I have done.

20. Consider, I beseech you, what was their sin to whom Amos pronounceth the dreadful woe, Amos vi. 1: *Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!* Why? What harm was there in this? May not men take their ease? Yea, when the times so permit. But now their brethren of Samaria were disquieted by their enemies, ease, which before was good, was now unseasonable and preposterous, because not consorting with their brethren's estate.

They lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall, ver. 4. What of all this? Doth any man keep a flock, and eats not of the milk thereof? Doth any man plant a vineyard, and not eat of the fruit thereof? Yea, of all or any the increase thereof at his pleasure? Yet is not all kind of eating (of moderate eating) fit for every season; there is a time as well of fasting as of eating and feasting. Herein then was their sin, that they did not sympathize with their brethren, who were either pined for hunger or fed with the bread of affliction.

They chant, saith the prophet, *to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David,* ver. 5. Why? Could they have followed a better example? Not if they had followed it aright; for David's musick was invented to praise the Lord. And yet (as the sons or daughters of Zion might have replied) partly to delight himself and his friends. It may be so; where is the point of difference then?

There is a time to be sad, saith Solomon, *and a time to be merry; a time to weep, and a time to laugh.* Every thing hath its appointed time; and every thing out of his time is preposterous and evil. If David did solace himself with pleasant mirth, it was because prosperity flourished in those times; he did not use it when news was brought him of Saul and Jonathan's death, nor when the angel of the Lord had smitten his people with the plague of pestilence. Those against whom Amos speaks did sin, in that they had their pleasant musick whilst their brethren's miseries did call them to the house of mourning; these had their delightful ditties whilst their brethren were ready to sing the Lord's song in a strange land.

Psal. xxxv. 13. Isaiah xxii. 12. Ezek. xxi. 10.

This was it that did so displease the Lord, that they were so desirous to please themselves with these or any other delights, whilst his heavy wrath was upon their neighbour countries. *They drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph,* Amos vi. 6. This was a grievous sin in Judah, that they were not sorry for the affliction of Israel, that is, of the ten tribes. It was a grievous sin in the princes and nobles, that they did not mourn and lament for the miseries of the mean and common people; *therefore,* saith the Lord, *now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the sorrow of them that stretch themselves is at hand,* ver. 7. So certain it is that God will make their misery greatest, that will not equalize themselves in public calamities to their brethren.

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The Second Sermon upon this Text.

CHAP. XXXIII.

MATTHEW VII. 12.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

The second general (according to the method proposd above, p. 7. chap. 32. sect. 5.) handled. This precept, Do as ye would be done to, *more than equivalent to that,* Love thy neighbour as thyself; *for by good analogy it is applicable to all the duties of the first table which we owe to God for our very being, and all his other blessings in all kinds bestowed on us. Our desires to receive good things from God ought to be the measure of our readiness to return obedience to his will, and all other duties of dependents upon his grace and goodness. God, in giving Isaac, did what Abraham desired; and Abraham, in offering Isaac, did what God desired. Two objections made and answered:* 1. *that this rule may seem to establish the old Pythagorean error of retaliation, and the new one of parity in estates;* 2. *that the magistrate in punishing offenders (it seems) in some case must of necessity either violate this rule or some other.*

THAT this precept, *Do as ye would be done to,* doth contain as much as that other, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,* is evident to every man at the first sight; for that we desire either to have any good or no evil done unto us, it is from the love we bear unto ourselves. And if we could be as desirous to do all good, and as unwilling to do any evil unto others, as we are to have the one done, the other not done, to ourselves, our love to others and ourselves would be equal. And if we love others (or our neigh-

How this precept, *Do as ye would* &c. containeth all the second table.

bours) as ourselves, then we have fulfilled the law. So St. Paul saith, Rom. xiii. 8, 9: *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

But here ariseth a question concerning the extent of these words, *If there be any other commandment.*

The frame or form of speech is universal, and may seem to import thus much, *If there be any other commandment whatsoever.* Notwithstanding, the best interpreters usually restrain it thus: 'If there be any commandment of the second table, it is comprehended in this short saying, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;*' whereas St. Paul had here reckoned up all the commandments of the second table, save only one, (which indeed is rather the *medius terminus*, or coupling of the first and second table, as much belonging to the one as to the other,) that is, *Honour thy father and thy mother.*

More fitly might the same words be restrained thus; 'If there be any other commandment, whether one of those ten mentioned Exod. xx, or elsewhere in the law, which concerns the duty of man to man, be it one or be they more, they be contained in this saying, *Love thy neighbour as thyself.*' But as for our duty towards God, or those four commandments of the first table, they may seem no way comprehended in the former saying; and this restraint may, it seems, be gathered from our Saviour's doctrine, Matt. xxii. 36, 37, 38; for being asked, *which was the great commandment in the law;* he answered, *Thou shalt love the*

Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. As if he had said, 'This is that commandment which contains in it most of the rest, or all that concern our duty towards God; but there is a second like unto it; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets;*' hence, as some collect, our Saviour in my text saith not, *This is the whole law and the prophets;* but, *This is the law and the prophets;* because this precept, to their seeming, is but equivalent unto that, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;* which is but one, and the less of the two, on which *hangeth the whole law and the prophets.*

2. Yet may it be further questioned in what sense these commandments are said to be two; as, whether they be, as we say, *primo diversa*, as distinct as the commandments of murder and theft; neither of which is any way included in the other, or dependent upon it; or whether they be only so distinguished as the Old Testament and the New; that is, as is said, *Novum Testamentum velatum est in Veteri, et Vetus revelatum in Novo;* "the New Testament is in the Old, but invalid; and the Old revealed in the New;" so we may say, that the first and great commandment, of loving God with all our heart, and all our soul, is implicitly contained in the second, of loving our neighbours as ourselves; and the second again expressly or impulsively contained in the former.

Thus much is certain, that no man loves his neighbour aright, unless he love him for God's sake, whom he loves above all, and whose love commands all other love. In this sense saith St. James, ii. 10; *Whosoever*

shall keep the whole law, besides, and fail in one commaudment, (that is, wittingly and willingly, or if he would grant himself an indulgence or dispensation of breaking that one,) *he is guilty of all.* Why of all? St. James adds, ver. 11; *He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill.* His meaning is, 'He that gave one commandment gave all;' and therefore, he that breaks one willingly and wittingly, keeps none truly and sincerely; because he observes them not inasmuch as God commanded them to be kept, for then he would be desirous to observe all alike; or if he shew divers effects of love unto his neighbour, these proceed not from the love of God, for that would command all his affections, and every effect of love as well as one. He can expect no reward of God as the fruit of such love, because it is not throughly rooted in the entire and sincere love of God. So that their reasons who restrain this precept only to the second table admit a double exception.

626 First, it is not proved by them that this precept is adequate, or only but equivalent to that, *Love thy neighbour as thyself.*

Secoudly, if it were, yet the fulfilling of this might be *interpretativè* the fulfilling of the law, seeing no man can love his neighbour, but he must love God above all.

3. It is as true again, that no man can love God unless he love his brother also; so saith St. John, 1 Ep. iv. 20: *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* So that our love to God must be the motive or incitement for us to love our neighbour; and yet the same love of God must be perfected and made com-

plete in us by practising love for his sake upon our neighbours. So saith St. John, ver. 11, 12: [c] *If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time.* As if he had said, 'We cannot direct our love immediately to God himself, because he dwelleth in light that none can attain unto; but our love must be bestowed upon our neighbours, that is, upon men in whom his image shineth; and loving them in him, and for his sake, we love him more than them;' and this is it which St. John saith in the same place, *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.* And in like sort, when we do to men as we desire they should do unto us, (because this is a duty acceptable to God, and proceeds from the love we bear to him,) we do not only perform our duty towards men, but also our duty towards God. So that this rule rightly practised is the whole law and the prophets, and in effect equivalent to those two commandments, *Love God above all, and thy neighbour as thyself,* as appears out of the former collections; but is more evident, if we observe the former extent or exposition of it, which was thus: 'Whatsoever ye would should be done unto you, either by God or man, that do to all men, as they are your fellow-creatures, for your Creator's sake.' Or if we would further search out the exact temper and constitution of mind whereat this precept aims, it consists (as I may so speak, in *equilibrio*) in the equipoise of our desires of doing and receiving good, whether the good be to be directed immediately unto God, or to

[c] So Christ said to St. Peter, John xxi. 16: *Lovest thou me?— Feed my sheep.* So David said to God, psalm xvi. 2, 3: *My goodness extendeth not to thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.*

our neighbours for his sake; that is, we should be as ready to glorify God's name both secretly with our hearts, and by outward profession and practice of good deeds, as we are desirous to receive any blessing or benefit from him.

And thus it is evident that the exact performance of this precept would be the exact fulfilling of the law and prophets; that the performance of every part of this duty sincerely, in some, though not in perfect measure, is in like sort the fulfilling of the law, *quoad perfectionem vel integritatem partium*, as the schools say, though not *quoad perfectionem graduum*[d]; that is, observing this rule, (as it hath been expounded,) we shall observe every commandment or part of the law, though none of them in that perfect and exact measure which we should; but performing the former, the blood of Christ Jesus shall cleanse us from all our guilt of sin whereto we are liable, if God should enter into judgment with us for not performing of the latter. Thus you have seen how this precept doth directly concern both the first and second table.

4. Yet further; that even that love and duty which we owe unto our neighbours doth collaterally likewise respect every precept of the first table; for we are bound by this love we owe one to another, every one according to his calling, opportunity, and ability, to instruct another in the knowledge of every precept,
627 whether of the first or second table, or any other part of the law; and to incite one another to the performance of the same, and to dehort from their breach or transgression. So saith the Lord, Levit. xix. 17: *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt*

[d] See St. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. 10. cap. 4. and 15. cap. 22. and Lud. Vives' Comment.

in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him; not to transgress any of God's commandments whatsoever.

The sum of all is this: The law of nature and the law of God teach every man to know what is good for himself, and thereupon to fix his desires; and this rule of nature, whose practice is here enjoined by our Saviour, binds every man to be as willing to further his neighbour or fellow-creature in pursuit of any lawful good, as he is desirous of the same himself, whether these desires be of things pertaining to this life, or to the hopes and means of obtaining the life to come.

An objection against this precept thus improved and expounded.

Yet against this precept it may be objected, that it may seem to establish the Pythagorean retaliation, which was such an error in philosophy as the present error of the anabaptists is in religion; both of them tending to an equality of all sorts of men. So may this rule seem at first sight to make all men equal; for if every man must do to others as he would be done unto, then must the master perform the like duties to the servant as he expects from him; so must the prince unto his subjects; the magistrate to such as are under him; the father to the son, &c.

There be some common grounds which will serve to answer other objections which may be made;

As, first, *Whatever ye would* &c. must be understood of a regulated will; a will not tainted with any inordinate self-love or sinful desires.

Secondly, it must be interpreted with a salvo to all God's other commandments; they must stand as God has set them, reconciled to one another, and not be set at variance by our exorbitant wills or affections.

Thirdly, it must not be extended to the dissolving

of order, and disparagement of dignities or powers ordained by God.

But this objection may have its proper solution two ways:

An answer to the objection.

First, the meaning of the precept is not, that we should do the selfsame to every man in every estate which we expect he should do to us, living in that estate wherein we are; for seeing there is an inequality of estates, there must be also an inequality or diversity of duties belonging to those several estates.

The meaning then is thus; 'Whatsoever you could wish that men should do unto you, supposing you were in the same estate they are in, that you must do to them now they are in that estate. Thus the greatest monarch on earth, inasmuch as he is but man, and might have been, or may be yet, subject to another's pleasure, must stoop to this consideration, what usage he would expect of his prince if he himself were a subject; and he must afford the selfsame to them. So must the father likewise consider what usage he did expect of his parents; and the like he must afford unto his children. So likewise must every inferior seriously consider with himself, what respect he would desire of his inferiors were he in place of authority; and the selfsame he must afford unto such as are his lawful magistrates; otherwise, (besides the evil of confusion,) if either superior or inferior use other less respectively or more contemptuously than they would be content withal themselves, the righteous Judge will reduce all to equality. Thus St. Paul teacheth, Coloss. iii. 20: *Children*, saith he, *obey your parents in all things: for this is wellpleasing unto the Lord:* and
628 ver. 21; *Fathers, provoke not your children to anger.* And concerning servants he saith more expressly,

Ephes. vi. 5, *Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.* ——*And, ye masters,* (as it follows in the 9th verse,) *do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.* If either servants would use their masters otherwise than they would be used if they were masters, or masters use their servants otherwise than they would be used if they were such, God will bring a more miserable servitude on the one, and continue it on the other.

From these places of St. Paul we may likewise frame a second answer to the former objection, thus: If we compare men in their several estates wherein they live, wherein they are, not wherein they may be, then this mutual duty of doing as we would be done unto must not be paid (as we say) in kind, but in proportion.

The rule is this; seeing all men delight in comfort and contentation of mind, and only that is such which is truly good in respect of the party which desires it. every man should be desirous to do that good to others which is best befitting his estate, wherein he may take true comfort and best content. Seeing great personages take great comfort in honour and serviceable respects, inferiors should with a good mind give *honour to whom honour is due;* and they should be as ready, though not to honour their inferiors, yet to afford them that wherein they have more delight; as, in relieving the poor and needy by hospitality; in countenancing others of competent estate in their commendable courses; in protecting them from wrong, or (in a

word) according to the exigence of their several states or occasions.

A second objection.

6. Again, it may be objected, that this rule, however we interpret it, must be violated by the public magistrate in inflicting punishment upon offenders. For many a man that hath deserved death according to positive laws, will naturally, and that, I think, without offence, be most desirous of life, and would make earnest suit for his release.

The question is, whether the public magistrate in this case should do as he would be done unto if he were in the like case. For it may seem, that either he must transgress the positive laws to which he is sworn, or violate this law of nature, which is more sacred than any positive law.

The answer is easy, from that which hath been said before. No public officer is here to propose unto himself this one man or malefactor's case, but rather the commonwealth's, or such in it as deserve better, and yet might be further endangered, by malefactors escaping unpunished: if his case were theirs, he would be desirous to have the law executed; and therefore must afford them this their just desire, if it be in his power, otherwise such pity finds ofttimes at God's hands the reward of cruelty.

A notable example whereof we have in Alexander de Medices, the first of that family that took upon him to be the prince of Florence, but not so willing to execute justice as to usurp authority. He, contrary to his country laws, granted pardon to a murderer at one of his near kinsmen's request; who afterwards, willing to purchase fame by freeing his country from his kinsman duke Alexander's tyranny, used the former malefactor's help in killing the duke which had given him life at his request.

7. But to return to that we were upon, when these objections crossed our way: God weighs our secret thoughts more exactly than we can do bodies gross and sensible. As the balance is just in our sight when both ends are even, and both alike apt to be equally moved with equal weights, so are our thoughts in God's sight just, when we are as apt to do good as ready to receive it. 629

Men's affections are right balanced, when they be as ready to do as to receive good.

We may desire or receive good either from men or from God, and we may return good respectively to both; kindnesses, (as we say in kind,) to men; duties of obedience, praise, and thanks, &c., unto God. To men we may repay good, either for their own sakes, or because we would desire good from them in like case; or else because we expect good from God. The equality of our conditions as men, as fellow-creatures, or brethren in Christ, binds us to afford the same measure of good to others; not which they have measured to us, but as we desire they should do to us if we were in their case. Every man knows his own desires, and therefore cannot be ignorant what he should do. If they have dealt ill with us, we may not in any case deal so with them; for we were unwilling to receive ill, and therefore should be as unwilling to repay it; and the rather, for fear God do to us as we do to them; because in so doing we took his office into our hands. If they have done us any good, we are more strictly bound to repay them in larger measure than we received it, because we were prevented by them: as in a balance even set, the rebound doth always exceed the first sway or motion; so in repaying such good to our brethren as God hath graciously dealt to us, we should exceed the former proportion; because we are bound to distribute to their necessities, so is

not he to ours. And always the freer the gift is, the greater should the receiver's thankfulness be.

This was that which aggravated the unthankful servant's offence, that seeing his master had freely forgiven him, yet he would not forgive his fellow-servant, Matt. xviii. 23. We are in many respects bound most strictly to render unto God himself according to his reward: (it was Hezekiah's sin that he did not so, 2 Chron. xxxii. 24:) first, because he hath prevented us with his blessings; he gave us being before we could desire it; and with it he gave us a desire of continuing it: secondly, he gave it us of his mere free will and abundant kindness: and therefore in all equity we are bound first to render what possibly we can unto him, and that with greater alacrity and cheerfulness than unto man for his sake; as reason teacheth us to perform our personal duties and services to our parents, patrons, and benefactors, with greater care and forwardness, than such offices as for their sakes we owe to their followers or favourites. Hence may we descry the equity of those two main commandments, on which the whole law and prophets depend, *Love God above all; and thy neighbour as thyself.* All the services of worship, of praise, thankfulness, or the like, which we return immediately to God himself, belong unto the first table. All the duties we perform to men, either because we have received or could desire like kindness from them, or because we expect some greater matters from God, belong unto the second table. It remains we see how this rule doth direct our thoughts for the true practice of every particular commandment: what I omit, your own meditation may easily supply.

8. None of us (as in charity I presume) is so

ignorant of God or his goodness, but often prays that he would continue his blessings of life and health unto us, desiring withal that he would do some other good unto us which yet we want. Could we in the next place take a perfect measure of our own desires of what we want, whilst they are fresh, and at the 630
height, and withal duly weigh those blessings of life and health, considering the full and sole dependence they have on the good-will and pleasure of our God; the strength of the one and weight of the other could not but impel and sway our minds to performance of such duties towards God, as his law and this rule of reason require. These are good beginnings of such performances as this rule requires. But here we usually commit a double oversight:

A double oversight.

First, we do not weigh blessings received as duly and truly as we should: for who is he that truly considers what life is, till he come in danger of death; or how pleasant health is, till he be pained with some grievous sickness, wound, or other malady? Or if we come by such occasions duly to esteem of life and health, or other blessings already enjoyed; or to take a true measure of our desires of what we want, whilst they are fresh and at the height; yet either we apprehend not, or we consider not, what absolute and entire dependence the beginning or continuance of benefits received, or the completing of others desired, have on the good-will and pleasure of our God. We think we are in part beholden to our parents for our life; to our physician, to our strength of nature, or good diet, for recovery of health; to our own wit or friends for obtaining such things as we desire. These or like conceits, arising from ignorance of God's providence, or want of faith in his goodness, are as so many props or stays that hinder the weight of his best blessings,

or the strength of our desires of further good, to have their full shock upon our souls and minds. Otherwise, the true consideration or feeling of their dependence on God's will and pleasure would sway and impel us to do our duty to him with the same alacrity we desire good from him; to love him with all our heart, with all our souls, with all our strength; yea, we would be as desirous to do his will and pleasure, as we are to obtain the things that please us—as unwilling any way to displease him, as we are to forego any thing we have from him—as willing to consecrate our lives and actions to his service, as we are to enjoy life and use of limbs.

If a landlord should command his tenant at will to do him such a business, perhaps to go on some errand of importance for him, or else he should go without his tenement, but promise him a better if he did it faithfully; the sweetness, as well of what he enjoyed, as of the reward he looked for, would disperse itself throughout his thoughts, and season his labour with cheerfulness, and make all his very pains sweet unto him. But if he had lately received an estate for lives, and could not hope for any further good shortly to come from him, although perhaps he would do what his lord bid him, lest he should be upbraided with unthankfulness, yet his service would be but faint and cold in respect of the former; like his that wrought (as we say) for the dead horse.

This may serve to set forth the difference betwixt the faithful or true believer's, and the unfaithful or unbeliever's heart in the performance of this great commandment.

The unbeliever, although he acknowledge in some sort that he received all he hath, and must expect all he hopes for, from God, and in this respect must do

what God commands, yet if at any time he do his will, it is without all devotion or cheerfulness; partly because he thinks the blessings he looks for must be gotten by his own endeavour, and such as he hath have been improved by his own good husbandry; nor doth he fear that the Lord should dispossess him of life or health, but there will be time enough to gain or renew his favour, before his lease (as he takes it) of life, of health and prosperity, be run out.

631 The faithful man steadfastly believes and knows that God is the Lord and giver of life—that he kills and makes alive—that he wounds and alone makes whole—that we have no hold of either, but only during the term of his will and pleasure: he firmly believes all the threatenings of his law; as, that either God will punish sinners with sudden and unexpected death, saying unto them as he did unto the rich man in the gospel, *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be taken from thee:* or else suffers them to enjoy life and health, and other blessings, to their greater condemnation: he believes likewise all his promises to the righteous, to such as do his will. Whence, as well the goodness of all the blessings he enjoys, (life, health, wealth, and estate,) as of those which he hopes for, whether in this life or in the life to come, do as it were provoke a desire in him of worshipping God and doing his will, equal at least to his desire of either having present blessings continued or greater bestowed upon him. His joy in praising God and keeping his laws is greater than in the enjoying of life, of his soul, his strength, or other endowments; his life is good to him, because it is from God; his soul is good, because he knows (and as it were feels) it to be created by God; his health seems good, because it springs

Good things are only pleasant whilst they relish of God's goodness.

from him who is the fountain of salvation: he loves these, because they are good; but he loves God above all, because he is better than all, even than the best of all his blessings. These are only good, because they are seasoned with a spice or savour of God's goodness.

Now as it recreates an hungry man to smell meat, but much more to taste it, so is it a matter to be more desired, to *taste the goodness of God*, as the psalmist speaks, than to enjoy the sweet savour or fragrance of him in his creatures. And we best taste the goodness of God, by doing his will and pleasure: as our Saviour saith, John iv. 34, *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

As we do desire our spirit at the hour of death should return to God, not only because he gave it, but because also he is our bliss, so even in this life, the sweetest joy that can be found is when we are lifted up in spirit to behold and taste the goodness of God; when we can say, with the blessed Virgin, *My soul doth magnify the Lord.* We should never desire him to do us any good, but with an instant return of a more earnest desire to be enabled to do what he would have us do; to love him above all, and all other things for his sake.

Having our thoughts and desires thus composed, although we have not the particular things we desire, yet shall we have *our heart's desire*, because we delight in the Lord, who alone can satisfy our hearts, otherwise unsatiable. Whereas the wicked, albeit he get possession of what he most desired, yet hath he not his heart's desire, because the desire of it was (like a good arm, as we say, cast away, being) set upon a wrong object, not on the goodness of his God, nor on his blessings for his sake, but for themselves:

He setteth his eyes upon that which is nothing, Prov. xxiii. 5, and so cannot satisfy. This gives witness to the truth of what the psalmist saith, psalm xxxvii. 16: *A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked*[e]. To the godly, the loving-kindness of the Lord is better (not only than all the means of life, but) than life itself: his soul is satisfied as it were with marrow and fatness, and his mouth praiseth God with joyful lips.

As St. John saith, *We cannot love God whom we have not seen, unless we love our brother whom we have seen;* so neither can we delight in God, who is a Spirit, unless we first delight (purely and aright) in his blessings, which are sensible and agreeable to na- 632
ture; for it is true in this sense; *first is that which is natural, and then that which is spiritual:* and the more we delight in them—so we duly consider they are his blessings, and that as well the continuance of them, as of our ability to delight in them, depends upon his pleasure—the more still we delight in him.

10. It is an excellent rule which Solomon hath given in this case: *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them*, Eccles. xii. 1. To be *a Creator*, in Solomon's language[f], imports as much as to be the maker of our bodies and souls—the sole giver of all things wherein we can delight, and sole author of all the abilities and faculties which make us apt to take delight therein—sole disposer of all opportunities that bring about the matters wherein we most delight. And *to remember our Creator*, in his language also, is, diligently and continually to

[e] See Prov. xvi. 8. [f] See book 6. part 2. chap. 11. [vol. v. pag. 282, &c.]

ponder these things, and to be affected or moved with them according to their weight and importance. But why doth he charge us to remember God in the days of our youth? Because in that age we are apt to take greatest delight in ourselves, or any thing truly delightful, our spirits being then most fresh and lively; so that the measure of our delight, whether in ourselves or in things without us, being then truly taken, would impel us to an equal delight in him that was Author and Creator of both, and to correspondent gratulation: whereas deferring of this remembrance or notice of our Creator till old age come upon us, wherein life grows to be a burden, and the wonted delights of life either irksome or insipid, (unpleasant, or without all taste or relish,) our thankfulness for them will be but faint, our gratulation worthless, our devotion cold and lumpish.

The former due estimate of our Creator's goodness being planted in youth, our delight in him would grow as our bodily abilities for all natural performances did decay; we might truly say with the apostle, *When I am weak, then am I strong;* and with the psalmist, *They shall bring forth more fruit in their age*, &c.

11. Thus it was with Abraham; he had feared God in his youth, and obeyed him in his mature age; and though he obtained a son by miraculous means in his old age, yet was he not more joyful at his birth and growth, than ready to give him again to God in his best age. He did unto God, in this particular, as God had done to him; nay, he did as he desired God should do to him: and God did to him above what he could desire, because he was so ready to do what God commanded him: he took and offered Isaac his son, his only son, in whom both he

and all the nations of the earth, as he hoped, should be blessed; and God, in lieu of this his obedience and thankfulness, promiseth, and in the fulness of time sendeth, his only Son, in whom he was well pleased, to assume Abraham's seed, and to offer himself in sacrifice for the sins of the world; a sacrifice for a blessing to all mankind. Thus, if we shew ourselves truly thankful for blessings past, God gives us over and above what we could desire: do we but what he would have done by us, he doth more than we could wish should be done for us.

As he offered Isaac his only son, whom he loved, in hope to receive him again in a joyful resurrection, so must we offer our dearest affections, our chief desires, yea, our bodies and souls, in sacrifice to him, in hope to receive them glorified, and crowned with immortality in the life to come: this is to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength.

There should be *the same mind in us, which was in* 633
Christ Jesus. He laid down his life for us, and we should be willing to lay down ours for our brethren, which is the chief and most transcendent part of the second table: but much more should we be willing to offer our lives, or consecrate ourselves to his honour and service; to offer ourselves in sacrifice to him when he requires, not only in remembrance of what he hath done for us, which we would not for ten thousand lives but he had done, but in respect of future hopes, which it were better we had never been, than they should not be accomplished.

We look he should in the last day acquit us from the accusations of Satan the great accuser; and in the mean time give testimony of us, as his faithful servants, to his Father. The duty which we owe to him is in this life to be witnesses of the truth he taught;

to testify unto the world that he *hath appeared*[g], by our lives and conversations answerable to his; by our readiness to suffer poverty, exile, disgrace, or ignominious death, for defence of his laws; to fear him, whether in life or death.

A duty semblable to every desire.

12. To every thing we can desire of God there is a semblable duty to be performed by us, without whose performance we cannot pray to him in faith. To pray in faith is to be so surely persuaded of God's benignity, as to be ready to render up all that he requires of us; to abstain from those things which we know to be offensive to him; especially from such as have any particular repugnance to that we seek. If we expect God should provide for us as for his children, we must honour and reverence him as an almighty and everlasting Father. If we desire he should protect us, we must fear him as our greatest Lord. *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you.—If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts. And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the Lord of hosts.* Mal. i. 6, 8, 9. No; they did not pray in faith. For so to pray, presupposeth a fidelity in the discharge of duties appointed for their calling.

God for his part never changeth. *I am the Lord, I change not,* Mal. iii. 6. As if he had said, This is my nature and essence, to be immutable, and *therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.* For so they had

[g] Titus ii. 11. [h] See below, p. 62. §. 13.

been, unless his mercies had continued the same[i]. But to do them that good they desired, or to deal as graciously with them as he had done with their fathers, he could not, (if with reverence I may so speak,) because of their infidelity or unbelief (for which cause, the evangelist saith, Christ could not work many miracles amongst his countrymen, Matth. xiii. 58): *From the days of your fathers you are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them.*

Now there must needs have been a change in God if he had dealt as bountifully with this backsliding generation as with their godly predecessors that had been steadfast in his covenant. But let them be as their fathers were, and he will be to them as he was to their fathers; for he is no accepter of persons, but rewardeth every one according to his works. Wherefore he saith, *Return unto me, and I will return unto you*, ver. 7. But they were so far from returning, that they would scarce acknowledge their sin. For they *said, Wherein shall we return?* They should have done unto their God accordingly as they desired he should do to them. They desired the Lord should bless them as Moses had spoken: *Blessed shalt thou* 634
be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Deut. xxviii. 3, 4. But God at this time had done to them (in some sort) as they had done to him; they had robbed him *in tithes and offerings*, Mal. iii. 8; therefore were they *cursed with a curse*, ver. 9. Notwithstanding, if they would deal better with him, he assures them he will deal better with them, ver. 10, 11, *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat*

[i] Ps. lxxviii. 38.

in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

As he that had wronged his brother was the forwarder to repine against Moses, so the words of such in this people as had most robbed and spoiled God were most stout against him. They said, *It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.* ver. 14, &c. It is not likely that they would thus speak with their mouths, for so they should have had no occasion to demand as they did, ver. 13, *What have we spoken so much against thee?* but that they thought in their hearts, that God did not respect them according to their deserts, or that his bounty had not been so great to them as to their fathers. If they said not, they thought with Gideon, *Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.*

He thought this change was in God, not in himself or in his countrymen. As most men at this day think that God is not as ready to hear our prayers as he was to hear the Israelites, or the fathers in the primitive church. When as the reason why he hears them

not, is, because we are not so ready to do his will. If we perform any obedience to his laws, it is, for the most part, such as those murmurers did: we offer unto him either the vile or the lame, or else but half that which is due: and yet persuade ourselves we deal bountifully with him too. In fine, we do so much as serves to ground a pharisaical conceit of ourselves, not so much, or not so sincerely, as may induce our God, who knows our hearts, to think well of us; we do not so to him as we desire he should do to us; for we desire that he should bless us above the ordinary means of human forecast or procurement, but we adventure not any practice enjoined by him further than we see good probability for; whereas, the honour and glory we owe unto him, as our Father and our king, as the Lord our God, is to hope above hope, to rely upon his providence, that prospereth beyond all possibility of good speed that we know, can foresee, or imagine. *He that will save his life,* as our Saviour saith, must resolve *to lose it:* that is, (according to the equity of this rule,) whosoever desires God to bestow upon him that immortal and far better life, must be in heart and mind resolved to resign this mortal life into his hand whensoever he shall demand it. Ofttimes we come to lose this mortal life itself by too much chariness or intemperate desires to keep it[k]. Such as fear death more than God's displeasure oft-times incur both; when as he that neglects all care of life, by God's extraordinary mercy and care, hath his 635
life given him for a prey, as it is said to Baruch, Jer. xlv. 5[l]; or as it is promised by God in the forecited third of Malachi, ver. 16—18, *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another:* (to wit, to

[k] See St. Basil de 40. Martyr.

[l] See the sermons upon that text, chap. 35, 36.

honour the Lord as he required): *and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.*

13. By the equity of the same rule we gather, that he which desires God should bless him with extraordinary riches, (that is, send him such riches as shall be a blessing unto him—for to many they are a curse,) must resolve, as Solomon speaks, to cast his *bread upon the waters*, to be open, so more openhanded to the poor, than he can see any probability in human reason how it should hold out, referring the issue to God, who will bless us over and above that we can desire or can procure by ordinary care, so we in sincerity of heart, not out of vain ostentation, be liberal and bountiful over and above the rate of our ordinary means.

If we desire God should send down a secret blessing upon our store, we should do alms so secret that the left hand should not know what the right hand gave. He that will honour the Lord with his substance shall have his barns filled with abundance, Prov. iii. 9. And the reason why many a poor man's store is not extraordinarily increased, as the Sareptan widow's was, is, because out of their penury they do not minister to others that are in greater necessity than themselves; especially to such as are dear in God's sight, as his prophets or messengers. We may not perhaps desire that God should work such a miracle in our days, for

the manner, but he can and will give as extraordinary increase, by means ordinary, though not usual; for his promise is still the same, *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things*, which the world cares for, *shall be added unto you.*

God blesseth not us ministers with such store of temporal things as we desire, because we minister not spiritual things to you in such measure as he commands: and God blesseth not you with such store of spiritual instruction as you do or should desire, because you are backward in ministering temporal things to God's honour.

To conclude, as we must be perfect as God is perfect, (though not so perfect as he is perfect,) so must we do to him as we desire he should do to us, though not in the same measure.

If we desire glory and immortality of him, which is the participation of his Divine nature, we must first be holy, as he is holy. If we seek for bodily health, we must use temperance and abstinence in our diet.

You need not fear as if this doctrine came near popery. That we must do that which is good ere we obtain that which we desire of God, is the doctrine of our church in the Collect appointed for the fourteenth Sunday after Trinity:

"Almighty and everlasting God, give unto us the increase of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command;" (especially make us to love the great commandments of loving thee, O Lord, above all, with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our strength, and our neighbours as ourselves;) "through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

636 *The third Sermon upon this Text.*

CHAP. XXXIV.

MATT. VII. 12.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, &c.

The impediments that obstruct the practice of this duty, of doing to others as we would have done to ourselves, are chiefly two: 1. *Hopes and desires of attaining better estates than we at present have;* 2. *Fears of falling into worse. Two ready ways to the duty:* 1. *To wean our souls into an indifferency, or vindicate them into a liberty in respect of all objects:* 2. *To keep in mind always a perfect character of our own afflictions and releases, or comforts. Two inconveniences arising from accersite greatness or prosperity:* 1. *It makes men defective in performing the affirmative part of this duty:* 2. *It makes them perform some part of the affirmative with the violation of the negative part thereof. A fallacy discovered. An useful general rule.*

1. THE third point proposed (chap. xxxii. §. 5.) was concerning the best means and method of putting this rule in practice. And we shall the sooner find out these, if we can discover those impediments which usually either disable or detain men from doing to others as they would be done unto themselves.

The original and principal impediment of this practice is, because we cannot, or will not, or do not, sufficiently and impartially propose other men's cases as our own. And this falls out ofttimes, because we are ignorant what our own desires would be in many cases; and therefore, having no rule within ourselves, we cannot practice this to the behoof of others. It is

seen by experience, that such as have the fresh prints or bleeding scars of any calamity upon themselves will be most compassionate to others suffering the like. The reason is, these men cannot but propose other men's afflictions as their own; they know well what they themselves have desired to be done unto them in like calamity; and according to the full measure of their own desires ariseth an alacrity and readiness to relieve others. The sight or notification of other men's miseries casts them, as it were by a relapse, into a fit of their own: so as they are afflicted whilst others are tormented, and for this reason are drawn by sympathy to do to others as it hath been, or as they desired it should have been, done to them, to bring themselves out of their present pain.

Thus far nature doth lead us, without any actual intention of mind, or consideration of performing this duty as enjoined us either by the law of nature or of grace. And if we would, as they say, but let nature work, it would teach us more particulars of every kind, and how to propose every man's case (of like nature) as our own. But such is our natural folly, that we learn not many of these lessons; but only such as experience teacheth us. Herein then is the difference between the foolish, and men spiritually wise. Experience, in the one, sets nature a working; in the other, reason, assisted by grace, from one or two experiments draws general rules.

2. The impediments which hinder us either in 637
taking a true estimate of our desires, or performing that to others which we ourselves would desire, are these—our eager desires either of being in better estate than we are, or our fears of being in worse. These are such sour doorkeepers as will not suffer any other men's desires or notifications of their miseries to enter

into our souls, or to make any impression upon them. If our souls or affections were neither inclined much this way nor that way, but stood at the push, the bare sight of any other's affection, whether joyful or sad, would possess us with the like. But whilst our souls are fast tied and led captive by some one desire or other unto some one object or other, (as commodity, pleasure, honour, advancement, or the like,) they cannot easily be drawn any other way. Yea, ofttimes, the proposal of others' miseries makes souls so affected cleek the faster hold; because they apprehend, that to relieve or supply those would (in such proportion) lessen and weaken the means of effecting what they desire and have purposed to effect. Thus, if one that hath set his soul on riches see his brother pinched with want and penury, he straight imagines that poverty is the mother of misery, and the more he gives, the nearer he shall bring himself to poverty; and this incites his desire both of increasing and retaining what he hath already got, that so he may be the better fenced against poverty, which he fears coming upon him as an armed man. If he should part but with a penny, or some small tribute, he thinks himself quite undone, crying, like the miser in Horace,

Quod si comminuas, vilem redigatur ad assem[1].

So likewise the ambitious man, if he see one crushed or kept down for want of means, he is not so much affected with his case, as seeks to prevent (if it were possible, all possibility of) the like in himself, and so seeking, hales all to himself, never considering by whose wants his increase of honour shall arise. If unto these you oppose one that relies upon God's providence, and seeks to content himself with what is present, rather than to entertain great hopes for the

[1] Hor. Sat. I. i. 43.

future; or one that thinks not how much better estate than he many others have, but thanks God it is so well with him, and knows it may be worse; his mind is easily moved to a fellow-feeling of others' calamity, because it is not fastened to contrary hopes, but stands rather in suspense, and more inclinable to expect a meaner, than to hope for a better estate.

The best means to put the duty in practice.

3. The best method therefore for right practising of this rule will be, to keep our souls as clear as the apple of our eye; to view all estates, but not to be dazzled with the glory of any; to frame our hearts so as they may take impression from any other man's estate, good or bad, but not to suffer the desire of any to incorporate in them. For as when the colour of any object is inherent in the sight, it hinders the impression of all others; so the desire of any sensible good, if it be incorporate in our hearts, will hinder us in the estimate of far better, and make us unapt to sympathize with our brethren: *All things are lawful for me*, saith St. Paul, *but I will not be brought under the power of any;* that is, he would so love all sensible good, as upon occasion to be content to hate it; he would not fasten his desires upon it, for so it should command him, not he use it. He knew to use the world as if he used it not, he knew how to abound and how to want. The former resolution was the root of those branches of this duty; *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* His preserving himself free, was that which made him as apt to take the impressions of others' affections, as the eye is to take the shapes of visibles. Hence was it that he could become all unto all, being not in subjection to any thing: *Et mihi res, non me rebus submittere conor.* But we who have not attained to this liberty of mind, nor can altogether cast off this yoke of servitude, but 638

have our souls as it were overcharged with many unnecessary delights and worldly desires, had so much the more need of counterpoises to bring them back to their equilibrium, to such a state of indifferency as may easily be inclined to compassion.

Keep an exact register or calendar of our good and evil days.

4. There is no man, I think, of riper years, but hath tasted afflictions at one time or other of divers kinds, and hath been acquainted with comforts of as many. The true character of both should be throughly imprinted in our minds whilst they are fresh, and daily renewed by meditation or proposal of the same or like. If we could truly take, and so retain, the true measure and estimate either of our grief in calamity or comfort upon release, these would serve us as so many keys or tunes of songs gotten by heart, so as we should no sooner hear another sound the like note, but presently we should consort with him; and if his case were mournful, we should ease him by participation of his sorrow, and seek remedy for it as if it were our own. He that never had experience of calamity, his misery is the greater; and he should do well to make it the less, by going to the house of mourning. Meditation will work whatsoever experience doth: *Gutta cavat lapidem*, &c.; others' tears, would we be much conversant among the mourners, would pierce at length even hearts of stone.

The former method was that which the Lord himself so oft inculcates to the Israelites, *Remember that ye were strangers*, &c. He expected that the remembrance hereof should make them like affected to strangers, and apt to mourn with them as they had done for themselves, and to afford strangers such comforts as he had afforded them.

This precept was five or six times, at the least, repeated to them. And not only they that had lived in

a strange land, the land of Egypt, but their posterity, were bound to celebrate for ever the memorial of their forefathers' estate. For this reason, whilst they reaped God's benefits in the land of promise, they were to leave somewhat for the poor and for the stranger, as it is expressly commanded four several times, Levit. xix. 9, and xxiii. 22, and xxv. 3, and Deut. xxiv. 19.

All which laws are not so far yet abolished, but that we may, upon our deliverance from any grief, misery, or destruction, consecrate some part of our goods, endeavours, or employments, to comfort such as are any where visited with the like, and by the solemnity of such acts, to renew the decaying memory of God's mercies towards us: so doing, God will remember us with like mercies again. But if we suffer his mercy to slip out of our minds, by neglecting our brethren standing in need of such comfort, we shall cry and not be heard, when calamity shall come upon us, like the unclean spirit, with more than thrice doubled force.

Surely, either this, or some practice equivalent to this, is as necessary to us as to the Israelites. For we are all subject to that πληθώρα whereof the Lord so often forewarned Israel. Even such as seem most upright, when once they wax fat, spurn with the heel, and cast the memories of their miseries and God's former mercies behind their backs; *Thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness,* saith God to Israel, Deut. xxxii. 15. *Then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.* Yet did the Lord look that Israel should have proved upright.

What was the reason that he waxed thus full and 639
fat? Only because he did not use that exercise which

God appointed to keep him under, and his heart from being lifted up. *Take heed,* saith the Lord, *lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.* Deut. viii. 12, 13, 14.

The daily and lively representation or recognition of this their estate should have been as usual to them as their meat and drink; yea, as it were, their thanksgiving before and after meals. Their visitation of others with mercy and kindness should have been as a perpetual homage for their redemption. These practices would have kept the children's minds at the same equable temper which their fathers' were at upon their first deliverance. And lest any man should think this people to have been by nature more gross, and so more subject to this disease, than we ourselves are, let us consider how easily all conceit of former calamity will slip out of our minds without such solemn recognition of it.

5. The nature of any good is better perceived *carendo quam fruendo;* and for this reason men in adversity can too well remember former prosperity. Thus the Israelites were no sooner hungry in the wilderness, but fall a longing after the fleshpots of Egypt. Extremity of want adds so many degrees of goodness to things indifferent or scarce tolerable in their kind! What would their murmurings have been, or how ill would they have brooked this exchange, if they had been fed with delicates from Pharaoh's table! But the nature of any evil is never throughly known but

patiendo. And for this cause fulness or prosperity expels the conceit of want, as grosser bodies do air out of such places as they are infused into; unless there be a vicissitude or change, if not laid upon us by the Almighty, yet voluntarily undertaken; by renouncing the use of what we might enjoy, or by using prosperity as if we used it not; and sometime in our greatest prosperity by visiting the house of mourning, and taking or renewing acquaintance with the children of affliction. *Blessed is the rich,* saith the Son of Sirach, *that is found without blemish, and hath not gone after gold.——Who hath been tried thereby, and found perfect?* &c. Ecclus. xxxi. 8, &c. Ecclus. xi. 25. 27.

Thus prosperity obliterates all former print or mark of adversity, even in such as desire no greater things than at present they enjoy; that they cannot do to others in adversity as they would be done unto, because they know not what the measure of their own desires would be. What men do not actually apprehend as evil, or are not touched with, they cannot have any desire to redress in themselves, much less can they relieve or comfort such of whose miseries they have no sense or intelligent consideration. Psalm xli. 1: *Beatus qui intelligit super pauperem.*

For these reasons and others formerly mentioned, those men are more unapt or more averse from commiseration, that are still in chase or pursuit of greater wealth, honour, or preferment. The putting on of a better estate puts away all memory of their own former, and all respect to other men's present miseries; for when hopes are sped, and delights strong, the good obtained puts as it were a new tincture or die upon the mind.

That these are the natural effects on such as long after growth and promotion, might easily be proved by induction, if the enumeration of particulars, which 640

these our times have afforded, were safe. It fares so with such men in the exchange of fortunes or estates, as it doth in change of diet. Such as find good relish in coarsest fare, (whilst they be in strait condition,) used to a better, without intermission, though but for some short space, have no taste at all of the former; and afterward, used to a more fine and curious table, begin to loathe or not to like that which wrought out the relish of the first; and so on by degrees, until they come to that pass that they can relish naught but dainties. So is it with many in our days, who in their younger years could for the affinity of their fortunes have sympathized with the poorest soul that goes from door to door; these a little promoted, know not what the petitions of the poor mean; they are strangers to their very language; they cannot conceive what their own desires would be in such an estate; the supposal of such men's cases for their own is a supposition of impossibility: advanced yet a little higher, they forget what they late have been; and are now further from taking notice of any inferior living in that rank from which they lately rose, though their ingenuous brother, perhaps their better every way (unless we value them as men do sheep or oxen, by the price of money which they are worth) than they were at their first rise, from renewing acquaintance with the meanest.

Two great inconveniences of wealth and greatness unduly sought.

6. The inconveniences arising from this kind of prosperity be two:

First, it causeth a great defect in the performance of the affirmative part of this precept, "Do as you would be done to." They cannot perform it in Christian sort; that is, with inward alacrity or cheerfulness; but only outwardly, and for fashion sake, unless it be to persons of their own rank, whose evils and calamities they can apprehend as their own.

Secondly, which is the worst of evils that can be imagined; whilst they perform some branches of the affirmative precept, that is, whilst they seek to pleasure others in their eager desires of preferment, or such things wherein they would be pleasured again, they bring a necessity upon themselves of transgressing the negative part of this precept, that is, of doing that to others which they would not have done unto themselves, if they were in their case. I am persuaded, that the miseries which fall upon the inferior sorts of men, by the mutual desires of great men to do one to another as they would be done unto, (that is, by pleasuring one another in their suits of honour, preferment, or enlarging their estates,) are more than all that God doth otherwise lay upon them in this life. Many thousands, whom God never cursed, are by these means forced to seek their bread in stony places. And is it possible that any man can persuade himself, that if he were in such poor men's cases he should be well pleased with their dealings, who seek to enlarge their superfluities by the certain diminishing of other men's necessaries for life? And yet who is he almost that thinks he doth not observe this precept well enough, if he be willing to do another man as good a turn as he expects from him, although he know not to whose harm it may redound? If no determinate person for the present feel the smart, they think conscience hath no cause to cry; as if God Almighty did not see as well what evil will hereafter ensue as what is present; and did not punish immoderate desires, which necessarily bring on with them public calamities, as well as outrageous but private facts.

7. With this fallacy, *a dicto secundum quid ad simpliciter*, we usually deceive ourselves in the performance of this duty. We think it sufficient, to do 641

as we have been done to, or if we do to some one or few as we expect from them, or as we could desire to be done unto if their case were ours; whereas we should examine it, not from our affection to this or that man, but by our indifferency of receiving and returning good towards all[n]. Ofttimes, to do one man good may be conjoined with some other's harm whom we have more reason to respect; and here we may quickly mistake in the proposal of their exigence as our own: *If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well,* saith St. James, ii. 8: *but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.* The apostle's discourse in that place infers as much as I have said; and his meaning is that which our Saviour had taught in the parable of the Samaritan, that every man, as man, is our neighbour; and therefore this duty of loving others as ourselves, and doing as we would be done unto, was to be performed to all alike, without respect of persons; for that which we are to respect is the exigence of their estate. So much is formally and essentially included in the duty itself; not that we may not be more ready to do good to one man than to another; for this we may do without respect of persons. Do good to all, but *especially to such as are of the household of faith.* The object of this duty is man, as man, in his lawful desires. Our love then, or readiness of doing good, must be increased according to the just exigences of their desires; where these are equal, our desire of doing good may be augmented according to particular respects of nearness, &c.; as, to a Christian before a Turk, to an Englishman before another. For if we must love others as ourselves, we must be most

[n] See vol. x. p. 567.

ready to respect that in others which we (in a regular way) desire should be most respected in ourselves.

Now (next to eternal happiness) life and the necessities thereof we most respect; and if we stand in danger of losing the one, or suffer want of the other, we desire that those main chances (as we say) may be secured before we begin to hunt after pleasures or superfluities. If then we must do to all men as we would be done unto, without respect of persons, that is, excluding none, we must first relieve the necessities of such as want, and tender the life of such as are in sickness or danger; and then, if occasion require, we may requite or deserve kindnesses in matters of innocuous pleasure, as in feasting, sporting, furthering men's advancements, or the like. Otherwise, to respect the pleasuring of a dear friend in these, before the relief of an enemy's necessities, is preposterous, and a breach of the law, because it is to have respect of persons.

8. The rule is general in all Christian duties. Our affections must be directed to the adequate object, (as we term it,) and set not more upon one part than another, but upon every essential part alike; or if any increase of affection or liking be to be made, it should always proceed from the increase of some exigence essentially included in the right motive or ground of our affection, or from some actual intention of that quality or property in some part of the object which is the *modus considerandi*, or which is the allurement or term of our desires or affections. Otherwise, setting our affections more upon one part than upon another, for some extrinsical or accidental reasons not included (as we say) *in modo considerandi*, in the formal reason or property of the object, the observing of our duty in that part doth usually enforce a defalcation or breach

of it in some other; just as uneven and irregular zeal to one or some few commandments doth always produce a dispensing with or neglect of the rest[o].

642 Ense Thyestæo pœnas exegit Orestes.

Orestes, in seeking to revenge his father's unnatural violent death, did no otherwise than he himself would have given the son of his body in charge if he had lien upon his deathbed. But yet he ought this honour to his cruel and adulterous mother, to have let her die at least by some other hands; not to have imbrued his own in her blood; not to have taken life from that body from which he received life. The poet's censure of his fact is acute:

> Mixtum cum pietate nefas, dubitandaque cædis
> Gloria maternæ laudem cum crimine pensat.

A righteous man, saith Solomon, *regardeth the life of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* Prov. xii. 10.

Pity upon dumb beasts is commanded in the law, (especially to such as do man service;) and he that is merciful unto them upon a true respect, inasmuch as they are partakers with us of life and sense, and communicate with us in our more general nature, will be more merciful unto man, his fellow-creature; but much more unto his brother in Christ; most of all to his fellow members in any civil and Christian society; for all these are included essentially in the object of this duty of loving our neighbour as ourselves. These are nearer bonds of brotherhood and neighbourhood; and the more such bonds we have, the more we are neighbours.

9. The modern Turks are very observant of this rule of Solomon in one part; for no man was ever

[o] Such mixed deeds are like a linsey-woolsey garment; or ploughing with an ox and an ass yoked; or sowing miscellan.

more merciful to his beast than they are to some domestic creatures; but not upon such motives or considerations as are directly contained in the complete object of true pity and mercy; for they are so foolishly affectionate to dogs, that for a small harm done to them they will not stick to kill an honest man: such cruelty is in their mercy; it may justly be denominated from the object, *a dogged pity*[p].

These rules or caveats, (beloved in our Lord,) first, of respecting the exigences of men's lawful desires; secondly, of not doing to some one man as we would have done to us, without consideration what may befall another which we would not have befall us; this again, of doing according to the essential grounds or motives of performing this duty; as they concern all, (for enlarging the affections, and directing any readiness to do good to others,) so do they most of all concern such as have the oversight of our souls; such as are put in trust with the dispensation of the good things belonging thereto, amongst such as have a common right to them. They especially should have a care that they do not more affect one than another, in bestowing of any public favours, but according to the exigence of their estates, or according to their obedience and performance of the public constitutions by which they live. As this concerns all such societies, so most of all societies of students[q]. For such as are given to Attic studies are usually subject to Attic affections; *Qui vult ingenio cedere rarus erit.* Every excess of favours in such cases is a testimony of excess of worth in those things wherein they can hardliest brook comparisons. Hence,

[p] See chap. 29. §. 9. [vol. x. p. 567.]

[q] This was probably preached at St. Mary's in Oxon.

Manet alta mente repostum
Judicium Paridis, spretæque injuria formæ.

As the wound is deep and grievous, so is it very dangerous in such as live daily together in one house, and meet at one dish; for living apart the wound might quickly close, and heal without a scar; whilst the sight of his *æmulus* or competitor doth rub and grate
643 upon his sore, and causeth such bitter exulcerations, as oft bewray their inward grief or disdain in outward gestures; yea ofttimes I am afraid have caused his wounds to bleed afresh by whose stripes we were healed, and by whose blood, which was shed for us, we hope to be cleansed.

Those persons who are of this disposition must needs be intreated to study moderation of desires; and to think of others better than their selves, at least of such as are in place before them. And you that are in place of authority, unto whose care and trust the dispensation of the good things of this place are left, let me in the bowels of Christ Jesus beseech you (even as you will answer it at the last day) not to have the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ in respect of persons. I speak chiefly to the sons of Levi: let me beseech you (for a close) to remember what was our father Levi's praise; or rather what the commendation of his function in the abstract; what was the foundation of his peace; the ground of God's covenant of mercy and long life with him; was it not this, as Moses tells us, Deut. xxxiii. 9, 10: *Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put*

incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar?

Lord, let thy Urim and thy Thummim be still with thine holy one.—Bless, O Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again. Amen. Deut. xxxiii. 8, &c.

The former Sermon upon this Text.

CHAP. XXXV.

JEREMIAH XLV. 2—5.

Thus saith the Lord——unto thee, O Baruch; Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest. Thus shalt thou say unto him——Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

Little *and* great *terms of relation. Two doctrines. One corollary. Times and occasions alter the nature of things otherwise lawful. Good men should take the help of the* antiperistasis *of bad times to make themselves better. Sympathy with others in misery enjoined in scripture; practised by heathens; Argia and Portia. The corollary proved by instance; and that made the application of the former doctrine.*

1. It is as true in matter of desire, as in materials 644
subject to sight or other bodily sense, *Magnum aut parvum non dicitur, nisi cum respectu;* "The dif-

Nothing is called *little* or *great* but in comparison with other things.

ferent bounds of great and little cannot be determined but by their references;" the least body that is, is not little in respect of the several parts whereinto it may be divided. No part can be said *great*, in respect of the whole whence it is taken. Of the largest country in Europe we may say, *Quota pars terrarum? Little England* is a competent style for our native country compared with France, Spain, or Germany; and yet Armorica with reference to England is truly instyled *Little Britain*. Within the less of these two provinces it would be matter of no long search to find huge molehills, and such petty hills as cannot deserve the name of mountains.

And in the revolutions of times, the exigence of some peculiar seasons may truly argue extraordinary favours in ordinary gifts; large bounties in small donatives; yea great excess as well in the matter as in the manner of such desires, as at other times would come short of mediocrity.

For a man descended and qualified so well as Baruch (to whom this message was here directed) to set up his staff at a Levite's lodging door, resolved to live contented with a poor bed, a stool, and a candlestick, in a corner of some country village, may with reference to modern practices seem to argue rather great moderation of desires, than any immoderate desire of great matters. But such are the straits whereinto Jerusalem, and Judah, his native country, now are brought, that to use the whole latitude of his lawful wonted liberties were to transgress the bounds of religious discretion, yea, to outrage in licentiousness. So heavy were the burdens which the Lord had laid upon the mother's neck, that for her best born sons not to stoop at her dejection bewrays in them a stubborn spirit of untimely ambition.

2. The least quantity of food that could be assigned was more than this people might lawfully take during the time of their solemn fasts[r]. And the meanest external contentments which Baruch at this instant could affect must needs be deemed a great matter, because too much in these days of public sorrow and discomfort. All he sought for was to be freed from the danger, disgrace, and scorn of great ones, in whom he saw matter, store, of just reproof, but little hope of amendment. And who will be forward to procure his own harm, by free speeches, without probability of doing others good? Baruch had once adventured to read all the woes of this prophecy in a solemn assembly of all sorts; a task which with fair pretence of conscience might easily have been avoided by him, if reading the word of God (as he found it penned by others) might in no case go for preaching. Unless the Lord had hid them, he for reading, and Jeremiah for indicting, had been used, perhaps, as the roll was wherein this burden was written. Now the roll Jehoiakim king of Judah did cut with his penknife, and after cast it into the fire till it was consumed, Jerem. xxxvi. 23. But though the paper were subject to the flame, as Christ's body (to use Theodoret's application of this type) was unto death, yet the word of the Lord endures for ever. And this is the word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah, and which Baruch was to preach, (after the king had burnt the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah :) *Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned. And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the Lord; Thou* 645
hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written

[r] Lev. xxiii. 27.

therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? &c. ver. 28, 29.

The occasion of Baruch's complaint.

3. Baruch's late persecution and hard escape (for being the imprisoned prophet's hand and mouth, in notifying the contents of the former rolls unto prince and people) might well make him shrink at writing or preaching this latter, (being purposely replenished with the addition of many like words to the former,) because more personally directed to Jehoiakim.

Out of the abundance either of grief or sorrow during the time of his latitation from the king's inquisitors, or out of present fear lest the tyrant's rage might be enlarged against him for undertaking this second charge imposed upon him by Jeremiah, or (as it is likely) upon both occasions, did he utter those complaints registered in the third verse of this chapter: *Woe is me now! for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.* Jer. xlv. 3.

But why should it grieve him not to find what the Lord had commanded him not to seek? for this is the tenor of the message which Jeremiah was to deliver unto him: *The Lord saith thus; Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not,* &c.

Two doctrines, or two propositions.

4. The sum of what I principally have, or would have observed out of the words of this text, may be comprised in these two propositions:

First, the desire of a faithful man, specially of a public minister, must always be suited to the condition of the times wherein, and of the parties with whom he lives.

Secondly, in times of public calamity or desolation, the bare donative of life and liberty is a privilege more to be esteemed than the prerogative of princes; or, in other terms, thus: exemption from general plagues is more than a full recompense for all the grievances which attend our ministerial charge or service in denouncing them.

A corollary added to the former.

Unto the former (the truth of whose doctrine must be the principal subject of my present meditations) I shall add or annex this useful corollary: As the intemperate desire of mirth, of pleasure, or preferment, in the days of public calamity, is in every private man preposterous; so where the humour is general, it is the usual symptom of a forlorn or dying state, or fearful sign that God hath forsaken the land and people wherein it reigneth. *Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not*, &c.

What were the great things which Baruch sought? Excessive pleasure, wealth, or honour? any positive delight more than ordinary, or solace greater than could agree with his calling? any exemption from tax, or trouble common to all? The principal, if not the only fault for which he was taxed by the prophet, was, his untimely desire of ordinary ease, of freedom from extraordinary and thankless pains in service distasteful to the present state, and therefore dangerous.

Did ever the austerest founder of most superstitious strict orders tie their followers to a more rigid rule than Baruch here is bound unto? The predicant, or begging friar, may interpret his ministerial commission in the strictest sense; he does not ride, but go as barefooted as he was born, to preach the gospel unto every creature under heaven, (unto stocks and stones, as St. Francis, his father, they say, hath fondly taught him.) But unto which of them was it by rule of 646

founder enjoined? Or what monkish votary did ever voluntarily undertake to proclaim Rome's final desolation in St. Peter's church in the year of jubilee? or menace downfall to red hats, and the triple crown in the consistory? Yet altogether such, no easier, was the task which Jeremiah had enjoined Baruch.

Was this injunction then given him by way of counsel or necessary precept? did he supererogate ought in undertaking? or had he not grievously sinned in refusing this necessary (but hard and dangerous) service? Surely a necessity (not from the general law, but from the particular circumstances of the time) was laid upon him, and a woe had followed it, if he had not read the prophet Jeremiah's prophecy. The scholar was not greater than his master, nor his liberty more; both their liberties were alike great, yet both subordinate, both subject to the diversity of times and seasons. Both were free in their persons, both free in their actions and choice of life; yet both absolutely bound to walk as they were called.

Things indifferent, yea lawful things, by circumstances become unlawful.

5. Had not Jeremiah as good authority as Isaiah and his fellow-prophets had to have taken a wife of the daughters of his people? Doubtless the law was one to both, and matrimony alike lawful to both; what then did restrain Jeremiah of that liberty which Isaiah used? Nothing but instant necessity (which knows no law) could make the use of the law unlawful to him; because most unexpedient for the present. So the Lord had said, Jer. xvi. 9: *Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.* And seeing the Lord at this time had determined not to pipe unto this people, Jeremiah had greatly offended if he had been taken in their marriage dances. He

knew children were an heritage which cometh from the Lord; that the fruit of the womb was his reward; and that in the multitude of sons was store of blessings; marriage he knew to be honourable amongst all, but at this time unseasonable for him. Good seed is well sown when it is likely the crop may stand and prosper. He planteth well that plants in hope to reap the fruits of his own labours. But who sows wheat unto the winter floods, or plants a vineyard for his fuel? Why then should Jeremiah at this time become an husband to beget sons unto the sword, or take a wife to bring forth daughters to destruction? To this purpose the Lord had inhibited Jeremiah in particular; (but the reason of the inhibition in like times is perpetually general: *Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place. For thus saith the Lord concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land; they shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcases shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.* Jer. xvi. 2, 3, 4. The prophets and sweet singers of Jerusalem and Judah had sometimes brought them such joyful ambassages of their espousals unto their God; their princes and people had formerly known such happy days of joy, security, and peace, that for Jeremiah and Baruch to have then affected this rigid course of life, which now they follow, would have been but as the taking up of a sad or doleful madrigal at a marriage feast, or as the acting of some ominous

647 direful tragedy upon a coronation day. But seeing the glory is now departing from Israel, the bridegroom leaving their coasts, and their mother, whom the Lord had once betrothed unto himself in surest bonds of dearest love, stands liable to the sentence of final divorce; the children of the bridechamber (specially Jeremiah and Baruch) must betake themselves to fasting, prayer, and mourning. Now to have used their wonted solace, mirth, or feasting, would have been all one, as if the one had piped, the other had danced, (a wanton jig or coranto,) in the solemnities of their mother's funerals, or as if they had marched together in a morris-dance over their father's grave.

6. Had that late fugitive[s], or other his fellow-postillers, learned thus to distinguish times and seasons, the supposed difference between precepts necessary to all, and evangelical counsels peculiar to such as aim at extraordinary perfection, would clearly appear to be but a dream or imagination, which hath no root but ignorance. Their error perhaps may thus be rectified, if to discover the original thereof be enough to rectify it.

Many divine precepts there be, from whose absolute and sovereign necessity no powers on earth can plead exemption; and yet the practices enjoined by them are neither necessary to all, nor expedient for any, at some times or in some places; because the precepts themselves may be disjunctive, or opposite branches of some more general mandate. It will not follow, 'This or that man in former ages hath done many good works pleasant and acceptable unto God, such as not the godliest man living is bound at this time to do; *ergo*, he did supererogate in doing them,'

[s] He means some man that had turned to the church of Rome.

that is, in plain English, he did more than he was bound to do. For though (*rebus sic stantibus*) no man be bound, yet every man (say we) stands bound by the eternal and unchangeable law of God to do the like, as often as the same external occasions shall be offered, or the like internal suggestions be made unto him by the signs of the times, or disposition of God's providence. But here, by the eternal law of God, we are not bound to understand only the Ten Commandments; the Decalogue (if without offence God's words may be so compared) contains only the predicamental rules or precepts of the eternal law. Other divine precepts there be more transcendental, which have the same use in matters of Christian practice or true observation of the Ten Commandments, as general maxims have in particular sciences. Such a precept in respect of the second table is that, *Love thy neighbour as thyself.* By this precept every man stands necessarily bound to perform more than ordinary charity toward his neighbour, as often as his neighbour's occasions to use his charitable help are more than ordinary.

The same use in respect of both the tables hath that other precept; *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.* Most general likewise, and most indispensable, are these two mandates: 'Let every man walk as he is called:' 'Time must be redeemed, when days are evil.' And seeing the inhabitants of every country stand bound jointly and severally to glorify God by due observation of his commandments, the more licentiously others violate any one or more negative precepts, his children always know themselves tied in conscience to so much more strict observance of the contrary affirmatives, which are always understood in the negative. The measure

Good men are and ought to be most religious in worst times.

of their sobriety and devotion must be taken from others' excess in luxury and profaneness.

Briefly, the prohibitions or injunctions expressly contained in the Decalogue, or other parts of the moral
648 law, describe the general bounds or limits, without which we may not, within which we must, continually walk. Our observation of God's providence and signs of the times will best direct us to such particulars within those limits as are most expedient for the present. The several exigence of every season, and the necessity and conditions of the parties with whom we live, will notify the definite measure or exact quantity of such good offices or performances as the eternal law requireth of us.

To be well instructed what is most fitting for the season, every man must ask counsel of his own heart; but after his heart, examined by the rules of the eternal law, hath informed him what is fit and expedient, it is no matter of counsel, but of necessary precept to do it; and that in such measure as the exigence of time, of place, and persons require; albeit others, which have not had the like occasions to consult their own hearts, be not bound to do the like. And some (it may be) of better note than is fitting for us to censure *nominatim*, have been induced to mistake such necessary performances, as are not usually undertaken without precedent consultation of men's own hearts, for matter of counsel, not of precept.

7. Subordinate to those general precepts, 'Do as ye would be done unto—Let every man walk as he is called,' are these disjunctive precepts of the apostle, Rom. xii. 15: *Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.* Both these precepts are necessary; both most necessary in their time and place; neither necessary at all times and in all places,

for they are incompatible. Hence saith Solomon, Eccles. iii. 4, there is *a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;* so then weeping and laughing, mourning and dancing, are both in their several turns or seasons expedient; but weeping and mourning most suitable to the occasions of most times, and more expedient for most persons; for *it is better to go into the house of mourning, than into the house of mirth.* Men seldom mourn without just occasions; and few men but often have just occasions to mourn: but many laugh when they have just cause to lament; and to consort with such in this their folly were extreme impiety, especially in such as Jeremiah and Baruch were; in all that are overseers or watchmen over God's flock; this made the prophet Jeremiah, chap. ix. 1, to wish, *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!*

Thus wished Jeremiah even whilst Jerusalem went mad in mirth and jollity; whilst her children were bold and audacious to hold on more than an ordinary pace in their wonted courses from evil to worse; because they were blind and ignorant, and would not see the day of their visitation drawing on. To men therefore endued with reason, (more especially to Christian men; amongst them, most especially to the preacher and pastor, who have Christ Jesus and the prophets for their pattern,) the precept is all one; 'To mourn with them that mourn, and to mourn for them whose case is mournful,' though haply not so apprehended by them; such as Jerusalem's case was, when our Saviour beheld it and wept, saying, *If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid*

from thine eyes, &c. Luke xix. 42; as also at this time, when this message came to Baruch.

Sympathy planted in brutes.

8. So natural is this precept of the apostle, *Weep with them that weep*, that even brute beasts, to whom God hath given neither speech nor language, nor understanding to perceive the words of the wise, or
649 the exhortation of the eloquent, are yet so intelligent, so apprehensive of the vocal signs or significations of grief uttered from others of their own kind, that they may well seem to bear the emblem of St. Paul's practice engraven in their nature. *Who is weak*, (saith the blessed apostle, 2 Cor. xi. 29.) *and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* For what beast of the field shall groan, and others of the same kind are not upon the hearing like affected? which of them panteth for pain, or want of breath, and others at this spectacle stand not amazed, either bereft of all motion, or else tortured with like? He that created all things in number, weight, and due proportion, hath mutually framed their hearts to others' groans and sighs, as a stringed instrument to a voice unison. So doubtless were our hearts set in our first creation, all in just proportion to their Maker; our voices were consonant to his word, our affections conformable to his will, all unisons amongst themselves; until the rector of this choir, that should have taken up this everlasting song, did strain too high; polluting our nature, and corrupting our instruments of breath, (ordained only to have sounded out praises to our God,) by eating of that poisonous apple. Since which time the best of our voices have been harsh and unpleasant in their Maker's ears; and besides the harshness of every one in particular, we have always sung out of tune, perpetually jarring among ourselves; whilst one hath sung, another cried; whilst one mourns, another pipes

or dances for joy. Yet doth the mutual bond of our affections remain still greater than any bond amongst beasts; we have this consort set out unto us in God's written word; *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them*[t]; for this is the effect of God's law, each part of which we are bound to obey; this is the sum of the prophet's writings; each period whereof we are bound to believe. What musick can be more pleasant to a pensive heart, than to have others bear a full consort with him in grief? Herein then we do not only omit a precept of Christ, but directly violate God's eternal law, yea the very prime fundamental law of nature, in that we do not sympathize with others in such sort as we desire they should do with us in like distress; in that we minister not comfort to others with as great alacrity and delight as we desire to receive it from them. Nature teacheth, and God's law commands, *to mourn with them that mourn;* and the necessity of such as mourn, and the true unpartial estimate of our own desires of comfort in like case, will give us the exact measure of our mourning.

Our mourning is then truly harmonical, when it is for the quality sincere, and for the quantity rightly proportioned unto the present necessity of times, places, or persons. And on the contrary, then we walk (as the scripture speaks) with a heart and a heart, and use a deceitful balance, when our hearts are open to receive comfort or benefit from others, and shut or straitened to return the like; or when we receive any of these from God or man with our whole heart, and either repay to the same parties from whom we had them, or distribute them to others, with a faint or

[t] See the Sermons upon this text, [p. 3 &c. of this volume.]

feigned heart, without such delight or joy in doing them good, as we take in having good done unto us. This eternal rule of equity was transcendent unto that particular strict command, so often inculcated to the Israelites when they came into the good land of promise; viz. 'Not to forget the stranger that lived amongst them.'

The positive precept aimed at through this negative, as the end or scope, was the cheerful relief of the poor stranger; and the immediate means unto this end was alway to remember that they themselves had been strangers in the land of Egypt; now to remember that they themselves had been strangers is (in the language of the holy Spirit) still to retain the perfect estimate of their former grief whilst they were strangers; to be able continually to sound the depth of their own misery, that it might serve as a key to tune their hearts in just and full consort to the miserable. They did then truly remember the strangers that were within their gates, when they sorrowed in the same manner for them as they had done for themselves; when the delight and joy that they had taken in their own deliverance from servitude and thraldom was made the measure of their delight and joy in freeing others from the yoke of servitude, in relieving the poor distressed stranger that sojourned with them. True compassion is but a fellowfeeling of others' miseries; and then only are we truly compassionate when their miseries are made ours; when (as the apostle saith) we are weakened at their weakness, and burn at their offence or grievance. Once thus affected, in easing them we ease ourselves, their comfort becomes our comfort; whence ariseth our cheerfulness and sincerity in doing good; for now we do unto them as we desire they should do unto us; yea,

even as we would do unto ourselves; seeing the only way to ease ourselves of this present grief, which is by sympathy in us, is by curing the protopathy in them. This is equity and righteousness in the sight of God, when we afford comfort unto others, according to the same measure we ourselves would receive it from others; or when we distribute God's benefits with the like joy to our fellow-servants, as we receive them from him; delight in receiving and delight in doing good ought to be so fully reciprocal in nature and quantity, that they should differ but as *via Thebis Athenas,* and *Athenis Thebas;* or as two times three and three times two. This is (as the wise man speaks) truly to keep the heart, when we keep it still in this *equilibrio,* not more inclined to accept than to afford a blessing; not more prone to rejoice at our own good, than to sorrow at others' harms; not more apt to be elevated with our own promotion, than to be depressed by others' undeserved dejection or discomfort. And albeit we were able to frame the whole course of our lives fully parallel to this straight rule, yet should we still remain unprofitable servants, and altogether unable to supererogate. All actual or purposed swerving, whether directly or indirectly, from this level, is a declining to hypocrisy. He that cannot contract his ordinary liberty in the use of things pleasant or profitable for this life, according to the exigence or aboding of the instant season, or doth not labour so to frame and settle the habitual bent of his affections, as they may be alike free and apt to be moved with sad occurrences, as with occasions of joy; such a man may haply often joy in his courses, but his rejoicing cannot be in the Lord; his laughter is madness, his choicest recreation folly; dissimulation harboureth in his heart, mischief is companion of his

thoughts; the issue of his untimely mirth is grief and sorrow everlasting.

9. But here I know it will be replied, that this constitution of mind is in these latter times more rare than absolute complexion in men's bodies, or mixture *ad pondus* in bodies natural. The replication perhaps is true, but true especially for this reason, that every man seeks great things, greater than Baruch here did for himself; and hearts stretched by desires unseasonably superfluous or exorbitant, to an higher strain than is fitting, can hold no consort with their humble brethren's affections; they can neither be brought to any true consonancy with the times wherein they live, nor with their own callings.

651 Howbeit we require not such an exact or absolute temper of man's heart as our Creator framed in our first parents. That was the pattern by which we must direct our practice, if our intention to imitate this pattern be sincere, and our endeavours to accomplish our intentions industrious and entire; whatsoever is wanting to our ability, the superexcellency of Christ's righteousness and merits (far exceeding our first parents' worth) shall abundantly supply in us, which were first the natural sons of Adam, then degenerate sons of the living God, now regenerate by grace, and adopted sons in Christ. But the experience of others' temper in former times (though Adam's children, as now we are, or once were) bewrays the complexion of our age to be deeply tainted with hypocrisy. For this I have found, (and every one may find without curious search,) that the very sight, remembrance, or rehearsal of others' miseries, united by the bond of common duty, hath brought the minds of such as have bent their ears to nature's discipline, or been well instructed in civility, unto a perfect sympathy, with as

great facility as men tune their voices to others' pleasant songs, or fashion their bodily motions to others' music.

Apathy, or want of fellow-feeling, (to speak indifferently,) is no natural property of the mere natural or unregenerate man, but rather a symptom of a graceless mind, obdurate with self-pleasing humours and desires: of hearts truly mollified with a mutual touch, (though but of moral or civil love,) one takes the impression of another's woe or grief, as easily as softened wax does the seal.

Apathy, a symptom of a graceless obdurate mind.

Thus the fresh memory of the camp, the consideration of the ark of God, and Israel's and Joab's lying abroad in the fields, makes honest Uriah[a]—joined with them in the common link of military life, though far disjoined in place—abjure with double oath the solace of his lawful bed.

Thus the remembrance of our Saviour's humiliation in Jerusalem makes that noble duke of Bulloigne[b], many hundred years after, refuse to wear a golden crown in that city, though but the lawful guerdon of his heroic worth; an honour well befitting his person, but not the place wherein his Lord Redeemer (under whose banner he fought) had been anointed King with his own blood, shed by the impression of a crown of thorns.

Are the true patterns of those practices extant only in the book of grace? or are the practices recorded only in sacred story, or of Christians, or sacred persons only? or have not heathen poets, which knew no law besides the laws of nature, and their rules of art, exactly painted the like patterns? Have not heathen histories, whose veracity is no way liable to just sus-

[a] Numb. xxxii. 6. 2 Sam. xi. [b] Godfrey of Bulloigne.

picion, related the like real practices of heathen persons?

> Non hæc apta mihi nitidis ornatibus, inquit,
> Tempora, nec miseræ placeant insignia formæ.
>
> *Thebaidos*, iv. 200.

It is the poetical character or speech of the noble princess, uttered rather out of fear than certain foresight of the mishap that might befall her husband, now setting forth unto the Theban war, in hope to recover his supposed right. As the reason of her refusing Harmonia's chain (that was the insignia or ornament offered her by way of gratification for gracing or furthering the present consultation of war) was muchwhat the same with duke Godfrey's refusal of the golden crown; so the manner of her abjuring it was not unlike Uriah's oath:

652 > Scilicet (heu superi) cum tu cludare minaci
> Casside ferratusque sones, ego divitis aurum
> Harmoniæ dotale geram? *Id, Ibid.* 204.

It was a dishonour (in her esteem) to be disclaimed by an imprecation; for a prince's daughter to adorn her head and neck with costly jewels like a bride, whilst her husband was clad in steel; and yet, so clad, every hour in peril of life. During the time of this his danger abroad, she desires no greater train at home than would suffice to expel melancholic fear; and that attire doth please her best, which best suited with her pensive heart, most likely to move her gods to commiseration of her widowhood. For such costly ornaments as were now proffered, she thought a fitter time would be to wear them when her husband returned in peace with such rich spoils from the enemy's court; and in this resolution, well fitting her present

[c] Argia in Statius.

estate, she leaves them to the proud upstart insolent baggage, whose longing desires after those unseasonable fooleries had enchanted the poor prophet her husband to countenance an ominous unfortunate war; the issue whereof was this, that after most of the noble Argives, sent thither by the enemy's sword, the prophet himself went quick down to hell.

This conclusion, you will say, is false in the literal sense, or rather feigned, but I would to God the fiction were not too true an emblem of the most state prophets in later ages. Such as are here represented, and no better, are the usual fruits of untimely desires, or discording appetites of parties united in strict bond of common duty, especially in men consecrated to public ministry. Always they are displeasing to God, in nature preposterous, hateful as death to civil and ingenuous minds.

10. But herein the poet (as the philosopher well observes) exceeds the historian for moral instructions. He may paint men and women as they should be, not as they are; whereas the historian must express them as he finds them. Most women indeed are not for their affections like this poetical picture of Argia; yet the carriage of Portia[a], as the ingenious historian hath expressed it, did far exceed it. When her husband, Brutus, had disclosed that inward grief and perplexity by his ill rest by night which he had purposely concealed from her in his waking thoughts, she takes his concealment as a disparagement to her birth and education, and as a tacit impeachment of her honesty: "Brutus," saith she, "I had Cato to my father, and was matched into thy family, not as a whore, to be thy companion only at bed and board, but *κοινωνὸς εἶναι ἀγαθῶν, κοινωνός τε ἀνιαρῶν*—to be as

[a] Of Portia, see Plutarch in vita Bruti.

true a consort of thy miseries as of thy welfare. I had never cause to complain of thy usage, no occasion to suspect thy loving affection towards me; but what assurance canst thou have of my love to thee, if I may not be permitted to sympathize with thee in thy secret grief, nor bear a part in those anxieties, whose communication might ease thy mind, and much set forth my fidelity? I know well the imbecility of our sex; we need no rack to wrest a secret from us. Ἀλλὰ τίς ἐστι (Βροῦτε) καὶ προφῆς ἀγαθῆς καὶ ὁμιλίας χρηστῆς εἰς ἦθος ἰσχὺς—But know (O Brutus) that there is a secret virtue in good parentage, ingenuous breeding and conversation, for settling and strengthening the frame of our affections, even where they are by nature brittle and unconstant. And this is my portion in these preeminences; a woman I am by sex, but Cato's daughter and Brutus' wife." To give him a sure experiment (answerable to these protestations) how ready she could be in all misfortunes to take grief and sorrow at as low a note as for his life he could, she had cast herself into a burning fever
653 by a grievous wound of her own making, before she vented the former complaint which she uttered, ἐν ἀκμῇ ἀλγηδόνος οὖσα—*in the extremity of her fit or pangs.* I may truly here apply that verse of old Ennius, as the late extinguished lamp of this university once out of this lantern in another case did: *Vos juvenes,* (shall I say?) nay verily, *Nos viri, patres et fratres, animos gerimus muliebres; illaque virgo viri.*

Was this preeminency (that she was Cato's daughter and Brutus's wife) of power sufficient to arm her female heart with manlike resolution and true heroical constancy to bear the yoke of all misfortunes with her conjugal mate; and is it no prerogative in Christian men, before a heathen woman, that they have God for

their Father, and holy church for their mother, Christ Jesus supreme Governor of the world, the Lord of life, and conqueror of death and hell, for their Brother? Is baptism into his death but a naked name, that our professed unity therein cannot unite our hearts in like affections? Is the effusion of God's Spirit but as the sprinkling of court holy-water? Are our daily sermons but as so many bevers of wind, whose efficacy vanisheth with the breath that uttereth them? or hath the frequent participation of Christ's precious body and blood no better operation on our hearts, than the exhalation of sweet odours upon our brains? Be they no longer comfortable than whilst they be in taking? Are all those glorious similitudes of one head and many members, of one vine and many branches, but hyperbolical metaphors? Is our mystical union only a mere mathematical imagination? Are those or the like prerogatives of our calling but like the solecisms of the Romish church, matters of mere title or ceremony, without reality? Beloved in Christ! if either we actually were, or heartily desired, or truly meant to be, true branches of that celestial vine, were it possible the strongest boughs thereof should be so often shaken with dangerous blasts of temptations, and we no whit therewith moved? Could so many flourishing boughs daily fade, and we hope that our luxuriant branches should always flourish? Should their goodly leaves hourly fall, and we live still as if we never looked for any winter? or should God so often threaten to pluck up the vineyard, which his own right hand hath planted, and yet the dressers of it still seek after great things for themselves, as if they never dreamt of dispossession? Would the most of us either seek to raise

ourselves as high as the highest room in the Lord's house; or make it a chief part of our care how to forecast mispense of time in merriment, gaming, or other worldly pleasures or contentments, whilst sundry of our poor brethren and fellow prophets (perhaps in worth our betters) die of discontent; whilst others, younger, run mad after riot abroad, lest they should be attached by sorrow and grief at home; whilst others begin to expect a change, and entertain a liking of Romish proffers?

Others, which have ever hated Rome more than death, begin to loathe their lives, and set their longing on the grave; desirous to give their bodies to be devoured by that earth which hath not ministered necessary sustenance to them; as being overcharged with maintaining the unnecessary desires and superfluous pleasures of worse deservers. Or would so many (were they true members of Christ) suffer that flock, which he hath purchased with his precious blood, to starve for want of spiritual food; that flock, from which they have reaped carnal commodities in greatest plenty?

But here I will not dispute whether non-residence
654 or plurality be simply unlawful: suppose in former times both had been lawful, both necessary, when the greatest scarcity was of scholars sufficiently qualified for the ministry; is it therefore now as expedient? It had been once more lawful for Baruch to have sought the ease of a retired life, than ever it was for any man to trouble himself with joining house to house, land to land, or church to church. But now it is unlawful: *seekest thou great things for thyself?* Yet what was his seeking to theirs? or what are many of their deserts to his? theirs especially who

have scarce been so much as scribes to a learned prophet, scarce ever brought up in Jerusalem at any Gamaliel's feet, but only came to this our Sion as so many spies, to find out the weakness of the place, to discover by what devices good statutes might be frustrate, and means made for conferring degrees upon drones. And drones having once gotten a degree or place in this bee-hive by others' perjury, will make shift to get spiritual preferment by their own. After unto their titles in the schools they have gotten an *Ite prædicate* from the generals of our spiritual warfare, they make their entrance into the church of Christ just so as if it were into the enemy's soil: once enabled to compass a convenient seat, they never think they were placed there as labourers in Christ's harvest, to gather and break the bread of life to his people; they only use it as a fort or sconce to gather strength in, till they can watch an opportunity for expugning a better. And advancements into highest offices in this spiritual charge go oft, not so much by virtues, as the golden mean. Experiments are so rife and frequent, that not the meanest Arcadian creature but lives in hope to make himself lord of the greatest dignity the land affords, if he be once furnished sufficiently for practice of the Macedonian stratagem. This seeking after great things, especially in men of so little worth, is at all times odious in the sight of God, and injurious to men. But in these present times, fraught either with examples or fearful threatenings of God's heavy judgments; in these times, wherein superstition increaseth as a plague growing up to quell hypocrisy and licentiousness, far less desires, even all unnecessary seekings, are preposterous and abominable, and yet in all states through the land very usual; and being so, they are ominous:

which was the corollary proposed [b]. I must omit discourse, and fall to instance.

12. One age may afford sufficient store of examples. A curious searcher shall not be able to find any disease either more dangerous or more general, than this late specified disease of Baruch, in the Christian world, at that time when the Lord did so grievously lance the whole body of it with the swords and spears of the Vandals, Goths, Hunnes, and other barbarians, scarce known before by name. The approach of all or most of them was so sudden and unexpected, that a man could scarce imagine what other errand they had to visit these parts of Europe, save only to be God's chirurgeons, in cutting off the dead and unrecoverable members of the church. Of what sort or kind soever the sins of any age or people be, when sinners once come to such height or progress in them, as the sight of God's judgments, or experience of his displeasure, cannot persuade men to forsake them, it is a true crisis of general plagues or desolations approaching.

A great warning, and a greater truth.

No sign more deadly than intemperate longing after unseasonable mirth or pleasures, of what kind soever, especially of such as are contrary to that course of life whereunto God for the present calls men: for they that seek after such things plainly declare that
655 *they say in their hearts, We shall have peace, albeit we walk according to the stubbornness of our own hearts*, Deut. xxix. 19.—*At cum dicant, Pax et tuta omnia, tunc repentinum eis imminet exitium.*

That the general constitution of the Christian world when the barbarians overran it was altogether such as we have said, (such as this people for the most part

[b] The author omits the second doctrine (to be handled in the next sermon) and passeth to the corollary, which he proves by instance.

is at this day,) Salvianus, a reverend bishop of those times, hath left recorded[c]. The disease of Carthage he thus describeth: *Captivus corde, et sensu nonne erat populus iste, qui inter suorum supplicia ridebat, qui jugulari se in suorum jugulis non intelligebat, qui se in suorum mori mortibus non putabat? Fragor* (*ut ita dixerim*) *extra muros, et intra muros præliorum et ludicrorum confundebatur*, &c.

The like stupidity and intemperance the same author out of his experience attributes unto one of the chief cities of the Gauls, whose inhabitants were so besotted with drunkenness, that they could not shake it off when they were beset with death: *Ad hoc, postremo, rabida vini aviditate perventum est, ut principes urbis istius ne tunc quidem de conviviis surgerent, cum jam urbem hostis intraret*[d]. He that made the sword then to them, hath also made the plague of pestilence his messenger unto us; both their commissions are of equal authority, both their summons should be alike dreadful; and yet what day did any die in this city by the arrow of God, but as many or more were dead drunk, or had surfeited of their beastly banquets!

Again, in Trevers, one of the most flourishing cities of the Gauls, and, as I take it, the reverend bishop's native soil, so intemperately were the inhabitants set on their wonted delights and vanities, that after their city had been three or four times sacked, and did not retain so much as the likeness of what it had been, yet they are still the same; and as if they had never sown unto the spirit, but altogether unto the flesh; as if their sportings and pastimes had been the only harvest

[c] Libro 6. De providentia Dei, pag. 139.

[d] See more instances of stupidity in the end of the Attributes. [vol. v.]

they cared to reap, no sooner was this storm of war and blood broken up, and the beams of peace restored again, but they erected their stages even in the fresh scent of deadly vapours exhaling from their murdered citizens buried in their city's ashes: *Pauci nobiles, qui excidio super fuerant, quasi pro summo deletæ urbis remedio, Circenses ab imperatoribus postulabant.* And may not we think, unless our magistrate's religious care had been the greater to have prohibited stageplays in these dangerous times of visitation, that a great many in this city would have adventured to have been *in circo*, though death had been appointed to keep the playhouse door. Should the stageplayer, or other instrument of vanity, have visited our suburbs within two months after our fourth or fifth visitation past, more of better rank amongst us would have been more afraid of being censured as puritans for speaking against them, (though out of this place,) than would have blushed to have been spectators of their lewd unseasonable sportings in places not so well befitting their calling.

I will not take upon me to censure this or any like recreation, as altogether unlawful. But what time hath been, for sundry years past, (would God this present did presage much better to come!) wherein the use of these or other more unquestionable recreations might not justly be censured for superfluous, if not preposterous? And with what indignity that worthy bishop[c] did prosecute these unseasonable vanities of his countrymen, I refer you to his books *De Gubernatione et Providentia*, a fit manual for the volume, but in these times an excellent cordial for the matter: *Ludicra ergo publica Trever petis?* "Art
656 thou an inhabitant of the miserable, more than thrice

[c] Salvian.

ransacked Tryers, and seekest thou after such fruitless toys as plays?" *Ubi (quæso) exercendæ?* "Where (on God's name) wilt thou have them acted?" *an super bustum, et cineres, super sanguinem et ossa mortuorum?* "upon the graves, upon the ashes, upon the blood and bones of thy massacred brethren and fellow-citizens?" The continuance of this vanity in the living did in his estimation surpass the misery and infelicity which had befallen the deceased.

13. Death and the destroying angel (which by their often soaring and hovering over our heads had overshadowed this city, and for the solitariness of these and like assemblies had sometimes almost turned our day into night,) have now, God's name be praised for it, taken their flight another way: yet shall not these admonitions seem altogether so unseasonable now as our sportings were then. Though secured we be from present dread, yet may we without offence (as men that had passed great dangers in their night distempers, or sudden affrights) look back by day in calm and sober thoughts upon our former ways.

And I beseech you take these following speeches that distilled from that sage and learned bishop's zealous pen, as preservatives against the like dangerous times to come, not as censures or invectives of mine to gall any for what is past. Suppose this reverend bishop had lived amongst us, how would he have taxed the unseasonable luxuries of late times! "Go to now, O ye that are strong to pour in wine; or ye that have verified the proverb by your practice, that man's life is but a stageplay, wherein you know to act none but the mimick's part; ye that make yourselves mutual sport by grieving or abusing others. Go to now, ye that have quite inverted Solomon's counsel; ye that have wholly consecrated yourselves to the

house of mirth and feasting, and hold it a hell to be drawn into the house of mourning: where do ye mean to celebrate your wonted sports? where shall your merriments, where shall your pleasant meetings be? What! in the city which the Lord so often hath smitten, which so often hath groaned under his heavy hand? what! even then, when the sore did run amongst your brethren? O fools and slow of heart to believe the writings of the prophets, and frequent admonitions of so many holy and religious men! might not nature, which nurtureth the heathen, which teacheth the beasts of the field and birds of the air to know their season, have also taught you how unseasonable your mirth, how prodigious your insolence hath been!" What foul indignity had you offered, though you had offered it to a private man, to revel it in the room wherein his children, wherein his wife had laid a dying? What human heart, what civil (though unregenerate) ear could endure to hear of one and the same family, some in the midst of bitterest agonies praying, others swearing or blaspheming; some panting for faintness, or rattling for want of breath; others cackling or shrugging at the sight of wanton sporting! And dare you account them for whom Christ Jesus shed his blood less dear to him than dearest children are to loving parents, or wives to most loving husbands? And what is this city[f] in respect of him! (would God you would permit it so to be!) But at the best could you imagine it any more than the chamber of the great King, whom neither the heaven nor the heaven of heavens can contain? Shall not his ear, who filleth all places with his presence, be as able to discern each dissonant noise, or disagreeing speech, or carriage with-

[f] This was preached in Oxford, after the visitation by the plague.

in the walls or suburbs of this city, as the most accurate musician's ear is to distinguish contrary notes or 657
jarring sounds within the compass of a narrow parlour? And what music think you will it make in his ears, or how will it sound to those harmonical spirits which by his appointment pitch about this place, when they shall hear in one corner some in the agony of their souls sending out grievous shrieks and bitter outcries, others out of their abundant heat of mirth and pastimes filling the streets with profuse immoderate clamours? Some, again, praying with deep sighs and grievous groans; others, foaming out their shame in drunken, scurrillous, or lascivious songs: some, having their hearts ready to break for grief, others, to burst their lungs with laughter?

These, beloved, have been the abuses in former times; which any reverent and zealous spirit that had lived amongst us justly might and questionless would have taxed more sharply: and yet of such reproofs the best of us might well in some measure have been sharers. But these dangers are gone long since; would God the guilt of our sins were as far removed from us! if it remain, like times may return again. What then remains, but that we repent of what is past, and take heed of what is to come. Lord! never let the pensive sighs, the mournful groans, or grievous outcries of dying men be mingled with our lavish mirth and sportings. O let not the songs of pleasure and the voice of death ascend the heavens, or appear at thy tribunal seat together, lest this most unseasonable discord sound still in thy ear, until the sound of the angel's trumpet summon us to that fearful judgment, wherein they may laugh and we may cry, wherein their comfortless sighs and dolorous groans may be changed into everlasting hallelujahs of joy and peace,

and all immoderate, unlawful mirth, all unseasonable and untimely pleasures, be terminated with endless grief. And as for such as seek to raise the spirit of unhallowed mirth, and belch out their scurrillous jests by pouring in wine and strong drink, even in the days wherein the Lord hath called them to fasting and mourning; O that they could consider, the time may come wherein they shall wish for one drop of that liquor for a whole day (which now they pour in hourly without measure) to cool their scorched tongues; and yet (unto their greater misery) shall not be heard in so miserable a wish; but, in the continual want of this and all other comfort, their pleasant songs shall be turned into bitter howlings, their wanton motions and mimick gestures into wailing and gnashing of teeth!

And as for you, reverend fathers, or you my much respected brethren, to whom any charge of others, either private or public, is committed; consider (I beseech you) what places you bear in these houses of God: all of you in your several charges sustain the place of righteous Job in his family, for your fatherly care over inferiors. Whilst then your sons thus banquet in their houses, every one his day, and send and call their friends to eat and drink with them; be you sure the Lord will require at your hands that you be so much more vigilant in your callings; not only in punishing the chief offenders in this kind, as some of you have begun, (though this no doubt will be an acceptable sacrifice unto God,) but even in offering up your evening and morning sacrifice for them, according to the number of their transgressions. For doubtless your sons have grievously offended and blasphemed God in their hearts; and therefore you must be so much the more diligent to offer up the sweet incense

every day. For all of us (beloved in our Lord and Saviour) see the days wherein we live are extraordinary evil, and the time must be redeemed by our extraordinary vigilancy, sobriety, and sanctity. As 658
others double and treble the sins of this present, in respect of former times, so must we in like proportion increase our industry and diligence, fervent prayer, good exhortation, charitable deeds, and sacred functions. Thus would you (reverend fathers) go before us in these duties, as you do in dignity, God would restore your lost sons to you again; and besides Job's restitution in this life, you shall certainly be partakers of Daniel's blessing in the life to come. For thus turning others unto righteousness by your good examples, you shall shine like stars for ever. God grant you (governors) wise hearts thus to rule, and all inferiors grace to follow your good examples and advice. Amen.

The latter sermon upon this text.

CHAP. XXXVI.

JEREMIAH XLV. 5.

For, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

The second doctrine (*propounded* chap. xxxv. §. 4. (*handled*, 1. In thesi; *touching the natural esteem of life in general.* 2. In hypothesi; *of the donative of life to Baruch, as the case then stood. That men be not of the same judgment about the price of life, when they be in heat, action, and prosperity, which they be of in dejection of spirit and adversity, proved by instances. Petrus Strozius Alvarez de Sande. God's wrath sharpens the instruments, and in-*

creases the terror of death. Life was a blessing to Baruch, though it shewed him all those evils from sight of which God took away good king Josiah, in favour to him. Baruch, as man, did sympathize with the miseries of his people; as a faithful man and a prophet of the Lord, he conformed to the just will of God. The application.

1. Of the two aphorisms deduced out of the text, the latter (left before untouched) comes now to be handled; and it is this:

In times of public calamity or desolation, the bare donative of life and liberty is a privilege more to be esteemed than the prerogative of princes. Or, in other terms, thus: exemption from general plagues is more than a full recompense for all the grievances which attend our ministerial charge, or service in denouncing them.

Of this, by God's assistance, I shall treat without further division, or method more accurate than that usual one, κατὰ θέσιν and καθ' ὑπόθεσιν.

First, of the natural esteem of life, or exemption from common plagues in general.

Secondly, of it as the case here stands with Baruch.

Vox populi, etiam vox Dei est:

659 It is the voice of nature uttering only what is engraven by the Creator's finger in the heart of man, and of creatures otherwise dumb: life is sweet; and would be so esteemed of all, could we resolve to live at home, endeavouring rather to improve those seeds of happiness which grace or nature has sown in us, than to encompass large or vast materials of foreign contentments. But unto men whose desires are once diverted from the true end of life unto the remote means destinated for its procurement; unto such men as have set their thoughts such roving progresses as Pyrrhus did; or with the fool in the gospel, are not

able to give their souls their acquittances, until they have enlarged their storehouses, and laid up goods for many years; the attaining of such particulars as for the present they most seek after doth rather whet than satiate their appetite of the like.

Hence, life attended with mean appurtenances becomes either loathsome or little set by, because the provision of necessaries actually enjoyed is as nothing in respect of those impertinencies which they have swallowed in hope or have in continual chase; the want of these latter unto men wedded unto vast desires is more irksome than the possession of them can be pleasant; so that to live without them seems a kind of loss.

Methinks Pliny's hyperbolical or fabulous narration of the greedy wild-goose which plucks so eagerly at the roots (of what plants I now remember not, but) so fixed to the ground that she ofttimes leaves her neck behind her, may be a true emblem of such men's intemperate pettish hopes, usually so fastened to the matters which they much desire, that sooner may their souls be drawn out of their bodies than weaned from these.

Wounds, though deep and grievous, are scarce felt to smart whilst the blood is hot, or the body in motion: no marvel then, if in the fervent pursuit of honour, gain, or pleasure, men sometimes suffer their souls to escape out of their prison before the flight be discerned.

In fine, as young gallants for speedy supplies of luxurious expenses usually mortgage their lands ere they know their worth; so life itself is oftentimes hazarded, upon light terms, by such as know not what it is to live.

We have heard of a soldier so forward to take the

A forward soldier.

advantage which chance of war had given, that he cried out unto his captain, "Follow, and we shall have a day of them;" whereas a perpetual night was taking possession of his eyes, his entrails being let out whilst he uttered these words. I can more easily believe this of an English spirit, though not in print, because it is upon authentic record, that Petrus Strozius, a famous Italian commander, being shot with a bullet of a larger size under the left pap, fell down dead to the ground, leaving these words behind him in the air; "The French king hath lost a true and faithful servant:" it seems his heart had been too full fraught with swelling conceits of his own worth.

I could instance in many, (did the time permit,) which have either encountered death with such undauntedness, or suffered life to be taken from them with so little ado, as their example may seem a just temptation unto braver spirits to disesteem the proffer here made to Baruch, as scarce worth the acceptance, unless the conditions were more ample than have been intimated.

2. But if that be true, whereof some of nature's principal secretaries have given us notice, *In ipso mortis articulo sumus vitæ avidissimi*[g], many such as have rushed upon extreme danger without dismay, or outward sign of fear, (could their tongues have been their heart's interpreters, whilst their souls did take their farewell, or whilst their heads were severed from their bodies, as Homer relates of his heroics,) their last ditty (I am persuaded) would have been *dulce bellum inexpertis*. It was well observed by the younger Pliny, *Impetu quodam et instinctu procurrere ad mortem, commune cum multis: deliberare vero et*

[g] See Val. Maximus de cupiditate vitæ.

causas ejus expendere, utque suaserit ratio, vitæ mortisque consilium suscipere et ponere, ingentis est animi[h]. For his sick friend to weigh life (though laden with grief) and death not fully apprehended, but approaching, in steady, calm, and quiet cogitations, not suffering his mind to be so far biassed or cast with the conceit of the one or other, but that the voice of physician or friend should sway his choice to accept of either, did, in this Roman's judgment, argue a truly resolute and noble spirit.

God sometimes in mercy (in justice often) so appoints, that death shall fully attach men, before they apprehend the least terror of it; which, without the special assistance of his Spirit, is, one time or other, terrible to flesh and blood without exception. That many are never heard expressly to recall their stubborn resolutions for abandoning discontented or disgraced life, doth not sufficiently argue they did not finally mislike their choice. They might mislike it when it was too late, the door of repentance being shut upon them, whilst with the foolish virgins they sought for the oil of mercy to renew the decaying lamps of life. For albeit the unwieldy desires of lofty minds may overturn the very foundation whereon they are built, ere notice can be taken which way they sway; yet at the very moment of dissolution (on which the conceits of what they are and what they must be move upon equal terms, as upon an indivisible centre) they will relent. And although they had formerly been persuaded that souls might be annihilated by death, yet to live, although with never so little, yea, even to live, because life is something, must needs seem better than to be utterly nothing. He that can see no mean betwixt the members of that division, *Aut Cæsar aut*

[h] Epist. lib. i. Epist. 22.

nihil, is questionless subject to some strange suffusion of his internal eyesight, or hath his hopes hoisted with wine, the usual bellows to inflame the heart with rash and desperate resolutions.

Many, for true valour better able to win an empire, and for wisdom more fit to manage it, than Cæsar Borgia, (either first author or chief practitioner of this false logic,) have been content to beg life and liberty at their insolent enemy's hands, whose presence they never did, nor ever would have feared in battle.

3. To give you a full induction in one instance; it shall be in that famous Spanish leader[i], which had Italy, France, Germany unpartial witnesses, and his professed enemies professed admirers of his heroical worth, Alvares de Sande; under whose colours not one of his countrymen but was more afraid to play the coward than to encounter the fiercest enemy that durst affront him. Or lest this his courage might be suspected to be of Cravon's kind, or the sphere of his valour terminated within the bounds of Europe; his African exploits against the Moors would hardly be credited by modern soldiers; unless Lanoue, a man without the reach of suspicion, either for ignorance or vulgar credulity in matters martial, had given them undoubted credence, and used this great Spanish commander's performance as an experiment, or *probatum*, to evince the truth of the seeming paradox, concerning the use of the pike in war. For what captain almost since the ancient Romans' times would have undertaken to maintain that in the schools as possible, which
661 this noble Spaniard proved by practice—to conduct four thousand pikes over a plain of four or five miles length, in despite of eighteen thousand horse, appointed of purpose to prevent their passage? Yet after

[i] See Lanoue, Paradox second, p. 204

six fierce encounters upon the best advantage that so great distance could afford unto his barbarous enemies, he brought his company all save eighty safe unto the place intended, leaving seven or eight hundred of his assailants dead on the field, the rest repulsed.

I should not have given so much credence unto Lanoue's reports or discourse, unless that noble English general, sir John Norice, (who entitled Lanoue to the father of modern wars,) had put in execution the rules prescribed by Lanoue for use of the pike and harquebus, or musket, with better success than either Alvarez de Sande, or that well trained Spanish band which slew that noble peer of France, Guaston de Fois, in that uncelebrated yet most famous retreat at Gant, never to be forgotten by the English nation.

Or if some young gallant or hard-bred soldier should here except against Sandeus, as the Aramites did against the God of the Israelites, it may be he was a man of an intrepid spirit in the field, but perhaps more fainthearted than many others of his time, to endure a lingering siege; I will refer such to his defence of Gerbis[k], where, having brought himself to the common soldier's stint, as well for the quality as for the quantity of his meat, he persuades the feeble remnant, being but one thousand left of many, which had been consumed by famine and such languishing diseases, (as scarcity or homeliness of diet usually breed,) to honour their death with the enemy's blood, rather than to yield themselves into their hands. Albeit the success did not answer his resolution, yet the attempt was on his part so valorous, that the Turkish general, (whose tent he sought to surprise by night, being) stricken with admiration of his worth, did woo him, upon honourable terms, to become servant to great

[k] Thuanus, lib. xxvi. p. 543. col. 1.

Solyman his master, as Solyman himself afterward did upon the fame. But he, whose carriage for any terror or calamity of wars was thus invincible, was by a short captivity (though not half so miserable as the princes and nobles of Judah were now to suffer) brought to deprecate death in humble sort, and afterward to esteem of life as a more welcome prey than the richest spoils of all his former victories, than the greatest kingdom that could have been offered him in the days of his prosperity.

How easily the Almighty can teach the haughty stomach or intrepid heart to esteem his favour here proffered to Baruch as they ought, we need no better testimony (for no better can be brought) than Busbequius's relation of this noble Spaniard's miserable perplexity during the time of his imprisonment in Constantinople. This Busbequius, the legate there for Ferdinand, being requested by some of Sandeus's *quondam* followers (now his companions in captivity) to comfort their master by his letters, tells us; *Ego recusabam: quod mihi non ratio, non oratio suppetebat, qua hominem tam graviter afflictum consolarer*[1]. It is a true and lively symptom of a great spirit's temper, whom the Lord begins to humble, once subject to the Almighty's discipline, which the same author hath observed upon this occasion: *Erat Sandeus ingentis spiritus vir, spei abundans, timoris nescius; sed qui sunt hujusmodi, ut omnia quæ optant, sperant: sic post quam cuncta retro ferri, et contra animi sententiam evenire experiuntur, ita plerunque animis concidunt, ut non sit facile ad æquitatem eos erigere,* pag. 230.

4. Pearls are precious (and, as he says, *cara, auro, contra*) though such simple creatures as Æsop's cock

[1] See Busbequius his fourth epist. De rebus Turc.

value them lower than a grain of barley. And life at 662
all times is sweet, always more worth than any pleasure, wealth, or honour, (unless that honour which cometh from God alone,) however haughty cockbrains or furious hotspurs esteem it lighter than a puff of popular fame. But besides the untimely loss of life, or ordinary dread of violent or bloody death, (the manner how it is God grant we never know by experience) but so assuredly it is, that when the wrath of God once throughly kindles against any land or people, it puts an unusual terror upon the countenances of their enemies; an unusual edge upon their swords: it sharpens the sting of natural death, and so envenoms the jaws and teeth of famine, and his fellow messengers, that the smart of their impressions, or the mere terror of their threatenings, becomes insufferably grievous, beyond all measure of former experience, or precedent cogitation.

Nothing before hath been held so base whereunto greatest spirits will not then be fain to stoop. Nothing so cruel or unnatural, unto whose practice the mildest and lovingest natures will not be brought, upon condition, yea, upon hope, nay, upon probable presumption, that they might become but half sharers in the donative which is here bestowed on Baruch: *thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.* Not the most womanish among the weaker sex in this whole land but would presume of so much manlike resolution, as by one means or other to lay down the wearisome burden of an irksome life, rather than she should be enforced to seek the preservation of it by killing them whom she had lately quickened, or devouring their flesh whom she lately brought forth with sorrow, and daily fed with her own substance. Suppose we then that those mothers of Jerusalem

which reintombed their sucking infants in their wombs were naturally more cruel and savage than other women ordinarily are? No; the Lord himself hath fully acquitted them of this imputation; *The hands of the pitiful women* (saith the prophet, Lament. iv. 10.) *have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.* And if women, women of pity, in the time of war, can thus bestrip themselves of all wonted bowels of compassion towards the tender offspring of their wombs, shall not the strong man put off his valour, and the valiant forget to fight? shall not flight be far from the swift, and wisdom perish from the politic? *It is the day of the Lord's wrath,* (saith the prophet,) *and who can stand, who can abide it?* Not such as for any motion of fear have stood more immovable than a rock, whilst the strongest walls of their defence have been terribly shaken with the enemy's shot. The stronger their wonted confidence had been, the greater their horror and confusion, when they shall discern the finger of God beginning once to draw the dismal lines of their disastrous fates; or when, with Belshazzar, they begin to read their destinies in visible, but transient and unknown characters; then feebleness, woe, and sorrow come upon the mightiest men, as upon a woman in her travail, breeding a dissolution in the loins, and causing their knees to smite one against another. The terrors of war, or other affrightments whereunto they have formerly been accustomed, though ofttimes very great, did never appear more than finite, because always known in part. But of these *panici terrores,* or representations which usher God's wrath in the day of vengeance, that is most true which the philosopher gives as the reason why uncouth ways seem always long: *ignotum, qua ignotum, infinitum est.*

And as the kingdom of God, so his judgments, and the terrors which accompany them, come not by observation: in respect of this sudden dread or unobservable terror wherewith the Almighty blasts their 663
souls whom he hath signed to fearful destruction, they may say of their adversaries' most furious assaults, as he did of his antagonist's most blustering words,

> ..... Non me tua fervida terrent
> Dicta ferox; Dii me terrent, et Jupiter hostis.

One while they shall seek for death, but it will not be found of them; another while death shall present itself to them, and they shall make from it, and yet in the very next moment wish they had entertained it. And though life abide with them still, yet shall it not be as a prey unto them, but as a clog, their persons being exposed unto their enemies' pleasure, perpetually tortured, either between vain hopes of escape and uncertain expectance of an ignominious doom, or between their desires of speedy and gentle death, and the lingering grievances of miserable and captived life. In all these respects the prophet's advice is good: *Seek ye the Lord, all the meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgments: seek righteousness, seek lowliness: if so be that you may be hid in the day of the Lord's wrath*[k].

5. But, be it true *in thesi*, that life in its naked substance is sweet; that ingenuous liberty, though mixed with poverty, is as a pleasant sauce to make it relish better: yet who shall persuade Baruch, as the case stands with him, so to accept it? Nay, methinks flesh and blood should regurgitate his former murmurings upon this motion made by Jeremiah, and interpret the prorogation of his life as a fresh heap of

The doctrine handled *in hypothesi*.

[k] Zephaniah ii. 3.

sorrows laid unto the burden of griefs under which he fainted. Proffers made by earthly princes must be respected by their followers, though worth little in themselves; for unto them court holy-water must seem sweet, although it have no smell of gain. But shall the King of kings obtrude that as an extraordinary blessing upon this poor distressed servant, which had been adjudged (as his own word bears record) for a bitter curse or grievous plague, from which two kings (the one of Israel the other of Judah) were not exempted but upon great humiliation and penitent tears? for was it not *the word of the Lord which came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me?* (for he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth and went softly;) *because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house*[l]. Such was that message which Hulda the prophetess delivered unto Josiah's messengers: *But to the king of Judah which sent you to enquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard; because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place*[m]. Yet did the arrows of Israel and Judah's

An objection.

[l] 1 Kings xxi. 28, 29. [m] 2 Kings xxii. 18—20.

most inveterate enemies, the arrows of the Aramites and Egyptians, make violent entrance for death into both these princes' bodies, long before the time by ordinary course of nature prefixed for dispossession of their souls: how then should life be unto Baruch as a welcome prey, being to be fully charged with all these hard conditions and bitter grievances, whose release or avoidance made untimely bloody death become a kind of gracious pardon unto Ahab, and a grateful boon or booty to good Josias? for what evil did the Lord either threaten, or afterwards bring upon Josias's posterity or people, which Baruch's 664
eyes did not behold? Nor did this lease of life and liberty here bequeathed unto him expire, till long after Jerusalem's glass was quite run out—till after her whitest towers were covered with dust, and all the cities of Judah and Benjamin laid waste—till the king, the princes and nobles were led captives, or slain; and the remnant, which war had left in Judah, as a gleaning after harvest, dispersed and sown throughout the land of Egypt, never to be reaped but by the sword, which even there pursues them (excepting a very small number that escaped, Jer. xliv. 28.) And what greater evil could Josias' eyes have seen, though he had lived as long as Baruch?

The difficulty therefore seems unanswerable, how life should be a more grateful prey unto Baruch than it might have been unto Josias? The objection pressed home.

6. But here, if we rightly distinguish the times, the persons, and offices, we may easily derive the violent shortening of good Josias' days, and this lengthening of Baruch's, to see the evil which Josias desired rather to be sightless than to see, from one and the same lovingkindness of the Lord. Josias (we must consider) was the great leader of God's The answer to the former objection.

people, and could not but wish their fall should be under some other than himself.

It was a donative more magnificent than the long reign of Augustus, that being slain in war he should go to his grave in peace. For this included his people's present safety, whose extirpation had been till this time deferred for his sake, though now at length he must be taken out of the way, that the messengers of God's wrath, which could forbear no longer, may have a freer passage throughout the land. No marvel, if after thirty-one years reign in prosperity and peace, he patiently suffered violent death, being thus graced with greater honour than either Codrus, the last king of Athens, or the Roman Decius, purchased by voluntary sacrificing themselves for their people. Perhaps the plagues which these men feared might otherwise have been avoided; or it may be, the fear itself was but some vain delusion of Satan, always delighted with such sacrifices. But that Jerusalem and Judah, standing condemned before Josias's birth, were so long reprieved, and so well entreated for his sake, we have the great Judge's sentence for our warrant. And therefore the word of the Lord which Huldah the prophetess had sent must needs seem good to him.

It was a message more unwelcome than such a death as Josias suffered, which Isaiah brought to his great grandfather Hezekiah, lately delivered from the Assyrian, and miraculously restored to life; but more forward to receive presents from Berodash king of Babylon, than to render praise and thanksgiving to his God, according to the reward bestowed upon him: *Behold, the days come,* saith Isaiah, *that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of*

thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Chap. xxxix. 6, 7.

Doth he repine or mutter at this ungrateful message? No; but with great submission replies, *Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken.* And, *he said, is It not good if peace and truth be in my days?* ver. 8.

Shall we hence collect that this good king was of that wicked tyrant's mind, who, as he had shortened her days from whom he had beginning of life, so did he envy his mother Nature should survive him, wishing the world might be dissolved at his death, and that old Chaos might be his tomb?

God forbid we should wrong the memory of so gracious a prince by the least suspicion of such un- 665
gracious thoughts! rather, his heart did smite him for shewing his treasury, his armoury, and other provision, wherein he had gloried too much, unto the king of Babel's messengers. This sin he knew to be such as his father David's had been in numbering the hosts of Israel: the plagues now threatened by his God he could not but acknowledge to be most just: and great therefore must his mercy toward him needs seem to be, in that for his sake, who had so ill requited this strange delivery and recovery, he would yet defer them. But seeing the wickedness of Manasseh, and the mighty increase of this people's iniquity from Hezekiah's death, did earnestly solicit the day of visitation[n], the former adjourning of it must cost Josias dear. And, God's arrows being fleshed in him, no marvel if they return not empty from the blood of the slain, or from the fat of the mighty: having begun with so good a king, it might well be

[n] 2 Chron. xxxii. 25, 26.

expected they would make an end of so naughty a people.

This was he, of whom not the people only, but the prophet hath said, *Under his shadow we shall be safe:* as he was a shadow (without question) of that great Shepherd which was to be smitten ere the flock were scattered; upon the occasion of whose death his disciples likewise said, *We trusted it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*[o]. And for Josias to become the true shadow, or the bloody picture of that great Shepherd's death, was a greater honour than if the shadow in the dial of Ahaz had returned backward ten degrees, in token of prolonging his days as long as Hezekiah's had been: specially if we consider, that the saying fulfilled in the great Prophet was verified in him: *Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none:* though he were slain, yet his army returned home safe, and he went to his grave in peace, being buried in his own sepulchre by his servants.

7. But, alas! Baruch lives in an age superannuated for any such grace or favour as Hezekiah or Josias found; in a city, in which, *though Noah, Job, and Daniel lived together*, yet *as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness*[p]. And shall not the word of the Lord, which Jeremiah hath spoken unto Baruch, be good? for is it not good, that when the Lord hath determined to send his four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword and the famine and the noisome beast and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast, yet his life shall be a prey, not unto these, but to himself? Yes; this is much better, considering the season, than if he had been sole heir to Hezekiah or Josias: three or

[o] 2 Kings xxiii. 30. 2 Chron. xxxv. 21, 24. [p] Ezek. xiv. 20, 21.

four of whose successors, all in their turns kings of Judah, he lived to see led bound in chains, and their nobles linked in fetters of iron. For Baruch (with reference unto these men's persons and present calamity) to have such an ample safe conduct, as no monarch living could have granted him, license to travel whither he listed, with full assurance of life, was an honour peculiar to God's saints; a reward wherein at this time my prophet Jeremiah and Ebed-melech (which had received Jeremiah in the name of a prophet, ministering bread and water, &c. unto his necessities) were to be his only partners.

8. But though they had liberty to travel whither they please, will they be as careless passengers without all regard of their mother's sorrows, wherewith the Lord had afflicted her in the day of his fierce anger? Jeremiah doubtless would have endured all the tortures cruel Babylon could have devised, upon condition Jerusalem and Judah might still have dwelt in safety. The Galatians were not more affectionate towards Paul, than Jeremiah was to the meanest 666
branch that sprang from good Josias; willingly would he have plucked out his own, to have redeemed Zedekiah's eyes, or to have prevented that lamentable farewell which they were to take of sight, the barbarous massacre of his dearest children. And how then can this short prolongation of life be sweet to Jeremiah the aged, or unto Baruch the scribe, being now to see such misery fall upon their native country, king, and people, as they might justly wish their mothers' wombs had been their graves, rather than they should have been brought forth to behold it? A thousand lives had been well spent, upon condition such calamity had never been seen in Jewry; and yet the prorogation of Baruch's and Jeremiah's life, though certain to see

the execution of all the plagues here threatened, (these becoming now at length without any fault or negligence in them, but rather by others' neglect of their forewarnings, altogether fatal and inevitable,) is much better than a thousand years spent in mirth and jollity. But would they not sorrow day and night for the slain of the daughter of their people? The Book of the Lamentations will witness tears, not sweet wine, to have been the drink of him that wrote them.

And shall life, though it have continual sorrow for its sauce, be sweet? Whose heart among us would not be sad, even full of sorrow; whose eyes would not overflow with tears, at the tragical representation of their disasters and calamities whose living persons we had always honoured, whose memory and never dying fame we reverence? And yet, to minds decked with more polite literature, or mollified with the Muses' songs, the secret delight which in this case ariseth from the poet's art and contrivance, much more from our observation of the strange concurrence of real causes conspiring to work designs worthy of God, (whether for mercy or for vengeance,) is infinitely more sweet and pleasant than the profuse mirth of lascivious comedies, or any other positive delight, whereof human senses (whether external or internal) are capable. And if with reverence any may be thereto compared, this secret placid delight (which is thus accompanied with sighs and composed sadness) most perfectly resembles the internal comfort of the spirit, always rejoicing in tribulation. Such truly was the joy and comfort which Jeremiah and Baruch found, who had now been admitted spectators twenty years and more of a true unfeigned tragedy; whose catastrophe was to contain the most doleful spectacle the great eye of the world (since it first rolled in his

sphere until this time) had ever beheld. Had they looked upon the several parts of this tragedy (the last scene especially) with natural eyes, the ghastly sight had doubtless inspired them with some desperate Roman resolution, to have acted the like cruelty upon themselves as the Babylonians had done upon their brethren; to have set a full and capital period to all the woes (which they had written against this people) with their own blood, spilt in the ruins of the temple, or mingled with the ashes of the altar. But now that the Lord hath enlightened their hearts to discern the sweet disposition of his all-seeing providence, still counterplotting the subtle projects of man, and making the politicians (which had accounted his prophets silly fools, unexperienced idiots, or raving bedlams) more curiously cunning than the spider, to weave the net which he had ordained to spread upon them: the more they sorrowed to see the desolation of their country, the greater still was their solace in contemplating the justice, power, and wisdom of their God, in accomplishing his indignation contrary to prince and people's expectation, but agreeable to their predictions.

Finally, as men compacted of flesh and blood, they could not but sympathize with miserable men, even 667
their brethren, their flesh and bones. As faithful men, they could not but be in mind and affection conformable to the Lord their God, by whose good Spirit their hearts were touched, and their souls illuminated to foresee the contrivance of his designs upon these his disobedient children, which had so often refused the ways of peace, which he would have led them in, but they would not follow.

9. From this double aspect, the one of nature, the

From a double aspect a twofold sympathy ariseth.

other of grace, and this twofold sympathy thence arising, the one with their Creator, the other with their fellow-creatures, doth the Lord frame this pathetical and forcible charge unto Baruch, Jerem. xlv. 4, 5: *Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not.* The exegesis or implication fully unfolded extends thus far: 'Baruch! wouldst thou reap pleasures from a land overspread with plagues, and drowned with sorrow? or seekest thou applause or credit among a people now become an hissing and astonishment to all their neighbours? Wouldst thou eat lambs out of the flock, or fat calves out of the stall, whilst famine devours the men of war, whiles such as have fed delicately languish for hunger in the streets? Wouldst thou be clothed with soft raiment, or crown thy head with roses, whilst such as have been brought up in scarlet embrace the dunghill? Is it thy desire to glad thine heart with wine or with oil, to make thee a cheerful countenance, whenas the visage of my Nazarites, sometimes purer than snow, and whiter than milk, is become more black than any coal? Or dost thou affect to live at ease in Sion, to be lulled asleep with sound of viols, whilst the outcries of the maimed, captives, or mothers robbed of their children, are ready to wake the dead out of their sepulchres? For a voice is taken up, (throughout all the cities of Judah and Benjamin,) *a voice of bitter weeping, like that of Rachel mourning for her children, and refusing comfort because they are not.* Sooner shall heaven fall to the earth, and the whole earth shrink into its centre, than one word my prophets have spoken shall fall to the

ground. And now, if thou wouldst be instructed, those days long since foretold by Micah are approaching: the days *wherein Sion must be ploughed as a field, Jerusalem become an heap, and the mountain of the house like the high places of the forest.* Thou seest whole cities, whole kingdoms, subject to mortality, and seekest thou to enclose that prosperity, which they could not entertain, within thy breast? Albeit thou couldst hope to live happily in the midst of so great misery as is decreed against thy native country, yet what is, or hath been therein, what is it thine eyes have seen under the sun, whereon thy love and liking could have been more affectionately set, than mine have been upon this land and people? For, hath it not been sung of old, *Jerusalem is the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant;* yet I (thou seest) must forego mine own inheritance, and be deprived of Jerusalem, my wonted joy: and art thou so wedded to aught in it, that thou canst not leave off to love it, and be contented to take thy life with thee for a prey, to possess in whatsoever place thou shalt make choice of?'

10. But is Baruch by this donative discharged of his former watchmanship in Jerusalem? No; as the proposal of these calamities ought in reason to wean his soul from wonted delights, or seeking after great matters; so one special end of his not seeking after these, is, that he may be more resolute and diligent in denouncing God's judgments against this people. The intimation of the former words may (on God's part) be thus continued:

'However I have determined to destroy this people, which have forsaken me; yet do not thou forsake thy former station: repine not at thy wonted charge, but

668 execute faithfully with alacrity that service whereto my prophet shall appoint thee. What though thou hast seen no fruit of all thy former labours; what though Jehoiakim begin to rage afresh, and this people hold on still to rebel against thee; hath not my Spirit continually warred with the uncircumcised hearts of their forefathers? Hath not the great angel of my covenant wrestled from time to time with this stubborn and stiffnecked generation? *What could I have done more to my vineyard that I have not done unto it? Howbeit at every season whilst I looked for grapes, it hath brought forth wild grapes;* yet hitherto have I not ceased, nor do I yet cease to prune and dress it. Have the inhabitants of Jerusalem at any time grieved thee or my prophets? or do I now send thee with this message unto them, and am not with thee? Yes, in all thy troubles I am troubled: and what art thou, or who is Jeremiah? Not against you, but against me is the rebellion of my people, for they have vexed my Holy Spirit; and doth this complaint well become thee—*I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest?*' Jer. xlv. 3.

All these and many like branches, which without violence to the meaning of the Spirit might be spread out more at large, are virtually enclosed in the text. The force and efficacy of the persuasion ariseth more particularly from the reference which these words, *Seek them not,* &c., have to Baruch's repining at the message enjoined by Jeremiah; and to that reply of the Almighty upon his repining; *Behold, that which I have planted will I pluck up,* &c., which last words (unless I misobserve the native propriety of the original) imply such an emphatical antithesis between the losses which God and Baruch might seem to suffer, as that speech of the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 36,

implies betwixt God's sowing and man's sowing[q]: Ἄφρον, σὺ ὃ σπείρεις, οὐ ζωοποιεῖται, ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ: *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.* The implication is, 'Much more shall that which is sown in corruption, by the Almighty's immediate hand be raised in glory.' Our prophet's words are *verbatim* thus: *Ejus, quod ædificavi, destructor egomet;* "Of what I have built, I myself must be the destroyer:" *Ejus quod plantavi, evulsor, egomet;* "What was planted by me alone, I myself must now pluck up:" *Et tu quæreres grandia tibi?* As if he had said, 'I may not reap where I have sown, nor gather the fruits which I have planted; and canst not thou be contented to forego thy harvest, which thou hopest for, but didst not sow? to the least grain whereof thou canst have no title, none so just and sovereign as I have to this whole land, to every soul that lives in Judah; and yet the whole and every part of this fair crop must be plucked up and transplanted.'

11. But though the Lord at this time had thus threatened, and more than half shut the door of repentance upon this stubborn people, yet the decree did not pass the irrevocable seal of his absolute and unresistible will, until some fourteen years after, (as hath been shewed in former meditations out of this place[r].)

As much as I now affirm, is included in Jeremiah's words to Baruch, at the very instant when he repined, Jerem. xxxvi. 6, 7: *Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the Lord in the ears of the people in the*

[q] See chap. 14. §. 6. [vol. x. p. 272.]

[r] Query, whether he means his sermons upon Jer. xxvi. and other texts, or *Pharaoh's hardening*, see book 10. [vol. ix.]

Lord's house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. It may be they will present their supplication before the Lord, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the Lord hath pronounced against this people.

Whether they would pray in faith or no, was *juris controversi*, a matter (at least to the prophet's foresight) of question; but that the Lord would repent him of the plagues denounced, so they would pray in faith, was *juris liquidi*, a point whereof he never doubted.

669 Nor is it possible our hearts should ever be throughly pierced with the right conceit, either of our own or of our country's sins, without this undoubted persuasion of God's infinite love towards all, and every one of us. Impossible it is for us his ambassadors to be armed with such indefatigable courage and diligence as the times require, either for discharge of our duty, in denouncing his plagues against the impenitent, or in averting men from impenitency, and exciting them to true repentance, until our souls be firmly possessed with the prophet's doctrine, of God's immutable facility to repent him of such plagues, as without our repentance are eternally and immutably decreed against us.

These alternations of God's lovingkindness and severity towards the same people, yea towards the same individual persons, are as the tropics, under which the messengers of peace most constantly run their contrary courses, sometime exhorting with all longsuffering to embrace his mercies, otherwhile sharply reproving and powerfully threatening his fearful judgments.

Constancy in truly observing and duly entertaining

the just occasions of this contrariety in the matter of our message, is as the centre, on which our souls being throughly settled, the whole frame of our affections, whether of love unto their persons, or of hate unto their sins, (over whom he hath made us overseers,) becomes parallel to the Almighty's will; who though he punish the impenitent with death temporal and eternal, yet doth he not will their impenitency, but useth all means possible to bring them unto true repentance.

12. It is, I confess, a matter hard for flesh and blood to conceive so much as may satisfy this desire of knowing the manner how Omnipotency should for many generations be possessed with an eager longing after a people's safety, which in the end must be destroyed[s]. How the great Creator of heaven and earth, which gave being to all things by his word, and made our souls immortal by his breath, should be as it were in a continual childbirth of sinful men, seeking to fashion and quicken them with the spirit of life, and yet they, after all this travail, prove but abortive and misshapen, *like the untimely fruit of a woman which never saw the sun*, never to be seen amongst the living. But no marvel if we poor worms of the earth, blind and naked, perceive not the force or nature of those burning flames of eternal and unchangeable love, (such is the very nature of our God,) seeing they are seated in that glorious inaccessible light; yet of that eternal and glorious Sun, whose brightness no mortal eye may look upon and live, we may behold a true and perfect model in the ocean of mercy and compassion, in the watery eyes of the Son of God, with sighs bewailing impenitent Jerusalem's woful case: *If thou*

[s] See the following Sermon upon Matt. xxiii. 37.

hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. Luke xix. 42. And elsewhere: *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* Matt. xxiii. 37. If Christ Jesus, as truly God as man, did thus thirst after Jerusalem's peace, after Jerusalem, thus glutted with the prophet's blood, did thirst most eagerly after his; far be it from us to think his lovingkindness is utterly estranged from us, albeit our sins have made a great separation betwixt him and us. Let us not then trifle out the time with curious disputes concerning the manner of his decree, but rather seek him with all speed and diligence whilst he may be found; laying sure hold on his mercy, before the swift approach of
670 his judgments (violently haled down each day more than other by the grievous weight of our sins) remove it without the reach of ordinary repentance.

13. It is a truth most delightful and comfortable to contemplate, 'that the immensity of our God is as full of mercy and compassion, as the sea is of water, or the body of the sun of light.' But let us withal consider, that the more abundant his lovingkindness towards us, the more sweet and fragrant his invitations have been, the more grievously have we provoked his fierce wrath and indignation by our continual wilful refusal to be gathered under the shadow of his wings daily stretched out in mercy for our safety. Be we sure God knows his own, as well as we do ours, and will not be overreached by us. The longer we defer the renewing of his wonted favours, the dearer we must account it will cost us; our suit at death will be more difficult. Those

prayers, those tears, those sighs, or other attendants or concomitants of true repentance, which in times past would have gone for current, will hereafter be esteemed light or counterfeit.

And yet, alas! who is he in court or country, in the city or in the village, in the academy or among the ignorant or illiterate, that lays his own or others' sins to heart as he should? or pours forth such fervent prayers and supplications unto his God, as our predecessors have done upon less signification of his displeasure, and fewer forewarnings of his judgments, than we have had continually these divers years past? Yea, who is he amongst all the sons of Levi, that with Jeremiah and Baruch hath utterly disavowed all care or study of his own advancement or contentment, that he may entirely consecrate his soul, his thoughts, and best employments to his Master's will, to take away the precious from the vile, to be as God's mouth, to cause others to conform themselves to him, not to conform himself to them? to set himself as a wall of brass for this rebellious people to fight against; whilst he thunders out God's judgments against great and small without all respect of persons? Nay, doth not nobility, gentry, and commonalty, clergy and laity, yea, I dare say it, as well *singula generum*, as *genera singulorum*, so mightily set their minds on great matters, and so stretch their inventions, either for getting more, or for improving what they have gotten to the utmost value, as if we would give God and men to understand that we had no inheritance in that good land wherein the Lord placed our fathers; but only a short remainder of an expiring estate, which we despair to renew; or as if we would have it proclaimed in Gath, or published in Askalon, that the fear of them is already fallen upon the natural inhabitants of

this land; now labouring only to prevent them in gathering up the present commodities, or to defeat them of their expected spoil. We demean ourselves just as the manner is when enemies more potent than can safely be forthwith entertained with battle invade the borders of any nation; in such a case, it is held a point of politic husbandry to waste the country round about them, lest it might maintain their armies. But heretofore I have had, and elsewhere shall have occasion to decipher all the symptoms of a dying state, either set down by the word of God, or observed by the expert anatomists of former dead bodies politic[t].

14. My message unto you, my brethren, the sons of Levi, is briefly this: Add not God's anger to our country's curse, which at this day, whether just or no, is bitter and rife against us; as if we were all or most of us like the companions of Jesus the son of Josedech, persons prodigious, but in a worse sense than they
671 were; persons that had procured her much, and did yet portend her greater sorrow; partly by our dastardly silence in good causes, but especially by our prophesying for rewards, and humouring the great dispensers of those dignities on which our unsatiable desires are now unseasonably set.

It was a saying amongst the ancient Romans, *Qui beneficium accipit, libertatem vendit:* it is thus far improved in true modern English; "He that will purchase preferments (ecclesiastic especially) must adventure to lay his soul to pawn." What remedy? Only this, to make a virtue of necessity; for so must every one do that means to live as a Christian ought. Let us not look so much upon the sinister intentions of

[t] I suppose he means his treatise of Prodigies, or Divine Forewarnings betokening blood, which was lost in his lifetime, and cannot yet be found.

corrupt minds, as upon the purpose of our God, even in men's most wicked projects.

And who knows whether the Lord, by acquainting us with men's bad dealings in dispensing ecclesiastical honour, do not lay the same restraint upon us his children which he did upon Baruch? Without all question, he absolutely forbids us to seek after great matters in this age, in that he hath cut off all hopes of attaining them by means lawful and honest; and all this he doth for our good, that, using Baruch's freedom or Jeremiah's resolution in our ambassage, we may be partakers of their privilege in the great day of visitation; wherein such as in the mean time crush and keep us under by their greatness, will be ready to give their wealth for our poverty, and change their honour for our disgrace, upon condition they might but enjoy life with such liberty and contentments as we do: or in case they shorten our days by vexation or oppression, yet faithfully discharging our duties, *whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.* And though they outlive us an hundred years, yet shall they be willing to give a thousand, yea ten thousand lives, if so many they had, so they might be but like us for one hour in the day of death. We need not search foreign chronicles, nor look far back into ancient annals; the registers of our own memories, and our fathers' relations, may afford examples of some sons of Levi, men, if we rightly value their admirable worth, of place and fortunes mean in respect of ourselves, which after their death (hastened perhaps by hard usage) have filled both this and foreign lands with their good name, as with a perfume sweet and precious in the nostrils of God and man; whilst those great lights of state (so they seemed whilst parasitical breath did blaze their fame) which had condemned them to privacy and obscurity were

suddenly put out, but with an everlasting stench. God grant their successors better success, that a precious well deserved fame may long survive them!

For ourselves, (beloved,) as we all consort in earnest desires and hearty prayers that the Lord would renew his *covenant made with Levi, his covenant of life and peace,* so let us join hearts in this meditation—The only way to derive this blessing from this our father unto us his sons, must be by arraying ourselves with Phinehas our eldest brother's integrity, by putting on his zeal and courage, to walk with the Lord our God in peace and equity, and to turn many away from iniquity. And now *remember them, O my God, that defile their priesthood, and break the covenant of the priesthood and of Levi;* smite them through their loins that make a prey of his possessions; and grind their heads, as thou didst Abimelech's, with broken millstones from the walls, or with the relics from the ruinated houses; yea grind all their heads, O Lord, to powder, that grind the faces of his poor and needy children; but peace be upon all such as walk according to this rule here set to Baruch, and upon all those that love God. *To this God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory now and ever. Amen.*

672 *The Publisher [of the folio edition] to the Readers of these two last Sermons,*

WHO may see that this great author was not afraid most acutely to reprove the sins of his own time; nor is the advertiser ashamed to set his seal to the justness of them by a full and true publishing his reproofs. Let the Lord be glorified, though with our shame, and justified when he speaketh judgment! And (to God's glory be it spoken) this word hath

prospered in the thing whereunto God sent it in some of the gentry and clergy; yet can it not be denied but there is still too great store of matter of reproof in the same kind. Many whose estates are sore diminished have minds still set upon great things; whatever they have lost, they find pleasure. Had the author lived to this day, I am persuaded he would have gone on with the holy bishop's complaints: *Perdidere tot calamitatum utilitates. Pacem et divitias priorum temporum non habent; omnia aut ablata aut imminuta sunt: sola tantum vitia creverunt: nihil de prosperitate pristina reliquum, nisi peccata quæ prosperitatem non esse fecerunt*, &c.[u]

These are wrecks indeed! To miss the good which may be got by suffering evil, is the worst of evils; to lose that gain which should be gotten by losses, is of losses the greatest; but to grow worse with suffering evil, is perdition itself. Now if any one of prosperous condition when he reads this shall triumph, and bless himself in his heart, saying, We have not sinned in devouring these men! I beg his pardon, and beseech him to read on; if he saw our faults in the last, he may perhaps see his own in the next; and humbly desire leave to say, 1. a man may punish sin, and yet (*inter puniendum*) commit a sin greater than that he punisheth: 2. in these times, and among the persons promising reformation, there hath been greater seeking after great things, and that with greater inordination too, than was in former times.

Our author complained that the Baruchs of his time sought great things by the art of Philip of Macedon. Would God my clergy, brethren, (so I do esteem such, and none but such, as were begotten to our mother by the right reverend fathers of the church,) had not used the art of Alexander of Macedon to make themselves great. I must appeal to God and their own consciences, whether the demolition of bishoprics, cathedrals, &c. was not intended for augmenting benefices, (wherewith men, in times accounted corrupt, lived well contented,) that they might satisfy the seekings of this present generation. But, alas! what comfort can it be to this present, that the former generation was so bad? or to the old ones, that the

[u] Salvian, in his 6th and 7th books, de Gubern.

present is so evil? *Hoc Ithaeus*——. There is none that fears God (sure not one of those that have erred in their simplicity) but will haste to his prayers, that God would graciously please to reconcile, amend, and forgive both, and unite serious and religious endeavours for the good of our afflicted church, whose very stones are so precious, and dust so beautiful, that they deserve our pity; yea, so, that if they be not set up again by us, they will either be transported to Rome, or consummate by doomsday.

673 *The first Sermon upon this Text.*

CHAP. XXXVII.

ROMANS II. 1.

Matt. vii. 1. Rom. xiv. 4. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.*

From what premises the apostle's conclusion is inferred. The limitation of the conclusion, to the securing of the lawful magistrate exercising judicature according to his commission, and in matters belonging to his cognizance. David and Ahab judging persons (by the prophet's art) feigned did really condemn themselves. The sense of the major proposition improved by virtue of the grammar-rule concerning Hebrew participles, and by exposition of the phrase. How the later Jews, judging the deeds of their forefathers, did condemn themselves.

1. It is not my purpose now to enter a long dispute with the Anabaptist, or other sectaries, which may seem to have help from this text to oppose judges and magistrates; being assured, that the apostle, who so warrants and establishes power exercised by heathens over Christians, in the thirteenth chapter, doth

not intend the least to disparage it here. It will be task sufficient for me to give the true extent and limitation of the text, which says, *that every one that judgeth another is without excuse.*

The very first word of the text, you see, doth bear the stamp or character of a conclusion: *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man.* Now every conclusion is a proposition, though every proposition be not a conclusion; for every conclusion is a proposition inferred from some one or more propositions more clear, or from which, being granted, it will necessarily follow. The first question is, from what premises this conclusion in my text is inferred. If you peruse the whole former chapter, it will be hard to find any proposition with which it hath any necessary coherence or dependence; we are therefore to look into this second chapter for the premises; and to consider, that however, in logical or punctual school disputes, the premises have always precedence of the conclusion; yet in rhetorical, civil, moral, or theological discourses, the conclusion is ofttimes prefixed to the premises or propositions whence it is inferred; and thus it is in this text. To draw our apostle's meaning into logical or school form, we must place his propositions thus:

The text is a conclusion.

Qu. From what premises inferred.

Whosoever doth the same things for which he judgeth another is without excuse, (and doth condemn himself by judging them.)

But every one that judgeth others doth the same things for which he judgeth them.

Therefore every one that judgeth is without excuse, (and doth condemn himself by judging them.)

It were a method brief and plain, first, to shew the truth of the major; secondly, the validity of the minor; but I must, according to my intimation given, 674

first speak of the true extent and right limitation of the conclusion.

The limitation of the conclusion.

2. The conclusion, you see, is universal: 'Every one, whosoever he be, that judgeth is without excuse, plea, or apology.' But may we hence infer, that all such as exercise judicature, whether ecclesiastic or civil, are inexcusable? or that the magistracy established in most Christian kingdoms is unlawful, as questionless it is, if all such as exercise judicature be inexcusable? No; to teach this were a kind of heresy. The apostle's conclusion then must be thus far limited, in reference to the parties judging. It doth not involve or include all that judge others, but such as take upon them to judge others, being not lawfully thereunto called. The judgment which men lawfully called do administer is not theirs, but the Lord's; and so far as they exercise his judgment, either in matters civil or ecclesiastic, they are worthy of honour, no way liable to this censure of such as judge others.

Nor must this conclusion be extended to facts or actions subject to the external judicature of courts; in respect of such, an unrighteous man (so he be a judge lawfully called and constituted) may give righteous judgment; and whilst he does so, he shall not be condemned for judging another who deserves judgment *in foro exteriore;* yet will God judge him for not judging himself *in foro interiore* (in case he be guilty of such sins as he judges others for, and judgeth not himself) whilst he judgeth other men's misdemeanors. For a man may be free from human or positive laws, and yet be a more grievous transgressor of the law moral, or of the law of nature, than they are whom he condemns to death, and that deservedly, for trangressing human positive laws; and such an one is highly

obliged to judge himself, that so he may, by God's mercy, escape the judgment of God.

But though this conclusion do not involve lawful magistrates moving in their own sphere, yet doth it lay hold upon and include them also, if they shall be found to exercise judicature in those things which belong not or are not proper to their cognizance, albeit they be in other cases lawful judges; for in passing beyond their line, or exceeding their commission, they put themselves into the number, and so into the condition, of those that take upon themselves to judge others, having no authority so to do. The extent of the conclusion.

3. Again, it is not simply *every one that judgeth*, but every one which does the same things which he condemns in another, *that is inexcusable*, or without plea. So the apostle in the words following seemeth to limit his conclusion; *For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.* Now he that doth the same things which he condemneth in another is properly ἀναπολόγητος, that is, *without apology*, excuse, or plea. He that once grants the premises (or two first propositions in a syllogism) is by the law of disputation presumed to grant the conclusion; the law of reason will admit no negative plea. Much more doth he which pronounceth sentence against another conclude himself under the same sentence, by doing the same or like fact which he condemneth in others. The sentence which he pronounceth upon any other in this case is more than a premise or antecedent—a precedent or ruled case to his own conviction or condemnation. Now, as to make a man grant any conclusion which he is willing to deny or conceal, there is no way so expe- 675
dite as to press the premises upon him from which it necessarily follows; so to bring a man to condemn or Another limitation.

judge himself for any fault or error committed by him, there is no means so available as to let him see how he hath judged or condemned some others for the same or like fault. Every sentence or judgment which a man makes against himself is a conclusion; and for the most part a conclusion which no man is willing to grant, unless he be by this means drawn unto it.

Two instances (in Ahab and David) who by judging others did condemn themselves.

Had that prophet, of whom we read, 1 Kings xx. 35, delivered his message (from the Lord) unto king Ahab (without any premises or preamble) in these or like plain terms—'Because thou hast suffered Ben-hadad king of Syria to scape out of thine hands, he shall do to thee as thou shouldest have done to him'—Ahab would have put him to his apology, or rather have left him inexcusable for meddling in affairs of state. But the same Spirit of God which gave him knowledge of Ahab's transgression, and resolution to tax or censure him for it, did likewise teach him the art of discretion, for the manner of delivering his message, and for the clearer conviction of this unruly king. He first disguised himself with ashes upon his face, lest the king by his habit should discern him to be a prophet; and making Ahab no party, he proposeth the case as his own, or as the case of some inferior man or common soldier. *He cried unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver. And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone*, ver. 39. Here is the case, or *species facti;* the king's sentence upon it is more brief, ver. 40: *So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it.* And the king having granted these premises, the prophet knew it was too late for

him to deny the conclusion, which he immediately presseth upon him: *Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. And,* upon this conviction, *the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased,* ver. 42, 43.

Had the prophet told the king the same truth directly and bluntly, it might perhaps have displeased him more, but it could not have made him so heavy as now he was; for his displeasure would have found a vent, and ended in rage and fury against the prophet. But being thus left without apology or excuse, (by condemning another for a less fault, if it had been true, than he himself had really committed,) his displeasure or rage was swallowed up in silent heaviness of heart.

If Ahab upon this conviction had been as ready to judge himself by humble confession of his fault, which he could not deny, as he was to condemn the disguised prophet for a far less, he might have escaped the judgment of the Lord which was here threatened, and did afterwards befall him.

By the like sacred art or cunning the prophet Nathan brought king David unwittingly to condemn himself by judging the rich man which (as the prophet feigned) had taken away his poor neighbour's lamb for entertaining his guests. 2 Sam. xii. 1.

Had Nathan immediately and directly told this otherwise good king, as afterwards upon this premised parable he did—*Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon*—the

678 king's anger, which was greatly kindled against the supposed rich man which had wronged his poor neighbour, would have kindled more fiercely against Nathan; but now that his anger against this supposed rich man was so truly and really kindled, as it burst forth into this sentence, denounced by solemn oath, *As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die.* The blow which he thus fiercely intended against a shadow, doth wound himself at the rebound; for when Nathan upon the former premises makes this conclusion, *Thou art the man—Thus saith the Lord God of Israel*, &c., he left him altogether without plea or excuse, as standing condemned by his own judgment upon another. And though the prophet brought him unwittingly to condemn himself, yet after his conviction he willingly acknowledged his fault; and so by judging himself escaped the judgment of the Lord, in part at least, though not wholly.

The facts for which these two kings did judge these imaginary or feigned persons were not so heinous or so palpable (if they had been true) as were the real transgressions, of which the prophets did clearly convince themselves. And whosoever doth the selfsame facts, or facts worse than those, for which he judgeth another, is altogether inexcusable, and stands convicted by his own conscience, condemned by his own mouth.

4. But albeit this major or universal proposition be unquestionably true—'Whosoever doth the same things for which he judgeth another, doth condemn himself; because the doing of the same fact doth necessarily draw the same sentence which he passeth upon others upon himself'—yet all this, how universally, how unquestionably true it be, doth not, to my apprehension, make up the full meaning of this proposition, πᾶς ὁ κρίνων ἀναπολόγητος; the full meaning,

according to the original, I take to be this; *Every one that is apt to judge or censure others is without apology, without excuse.* The word in the original (rendered by Mr. Calvin *qui judicas*, and in our English, *thou that judgest*) is a participle, κρίνων. And the participles of the Greek Testament, or the Septuagint, are to be taken according to the rate or value of the Hebrew.

Now the Hebrew participles (as every one that hath any insight in that dialect will observe) do more properly denote the habits or custom, than the transient acts, and are of the same value with the Latin verbals. So the Greek ὁ ποιῶν ἁμαρτίαν, *facieus malum*, is as much as *factor mali*, or *operarius iniquitatis*, "a malefactor," or "worker of iniquity." So in the fourth of St. Matthew, ver. 3, ὁ πειράζων; so 1 Thess. iii. 5. ὁ πειράζων ἐπείρασε; so Matt. xiii. 3. ὁ σπείρων τοῦ σπείρειν; and so in this place ὁ κρίνων is more than *he that judgeth*, as much in Latin as *judex* or *censor*, he that is a judge or censurer.

Now as a man may *appetere vinum*, and yet not be *appetens vini*, so may he sometimes judge or censure another, and yet not be a judge or censurer of others, for that notes the habit or custom, not the act alone.

Now every one that taketh upon him the habit or custom of censuring others is without apology, or inexcusable, not only in that he takes upon him that judicature which God hath not appointed him to exercise, but because it is impossible for any man much accustomed to judge or censure others not to do the same things which he condemns in others; (which was the effect and sense of the minor proposition;) for, as St. James tells us, (not excluding himself, who questionless was one of the best men then living,) *in many things we offend all.* And if we offend in many

The minor of the foregoing syllogism. 679

things, and accustom or use ourselves to censure many, or to pass our sentence upon most things which we see amiss, we cannot possibly avoid the condemning of ourselves, because we cannot possibly avoid some one or other of those faults which we censure or condemn in others.

Again; as it is not every matter for which a man may in any sort be judged, (as for natural parts, or businesses of art, suppose, unartificially done,) so neither is it every kind of judging or censuring which is here meant. The text must needs (at least) have more special force and reference to matters of more special weight or consequence (to give instance) in such matter of life and doctrine as imports, or is conceived to imply, favour or disfavour with God; as, that this man is an elect vessel, that, a castaway, or reprobate. Now every one doth condemn himself who so judges others in these points, that he seeks to justify himself by judging them. He saith in his heart, as the Pharisee did, *I thank God I am not as other men are, nor as this publican.* The Pharisee had taken notice of some good evidences or qualities in himself, of which he saw a want in the publican; and of some ill conditions in the publican from which he thought himself free in the particular; *et sic ad pauca respiciens facile pronunciat.* This is the ordinary ground of rash and uncharitable judgment when men compare their own good parts with others' bad.

5. To sift the original ὁ κρίνων a little further; besides the multiplicity of censuring, or proneness to judge others, it imports a kind of usurped authority over others. For whosoever takes upon him κρίνειν, *to sentence* or judge another, hath a secret persuasion or conceit that he is better than the man whom he judgeth, at least in respect of those things for which

he judgeth him; otherwise, he would not judge, but rather pity him, or pray for him, and for himself, lest he fall into the like temptation. No man is fit to judge or censure another, but he that is able to correct or reform that fault or error for which he judgeth him. Now the fervent zeal of correcting or reforming abuses most gross and palpable, usually misleads men not well instructed in the ways of God into worse errors than those are which they seek to reform in others. He that will take upon him to be a reformer of others, must first be throughly reformed himself, must be *renewed* (as the apostle speaks) *in the spirit of his mind*, enabled by the Spirit of God, and by the knowledge of his providence, to see afar off as well as near at hand; and to forecast the inconveniences which may follow long after, as well as to discern mischiefs present, or their redress.

And when our apostle saith, *Thou that judgest another doest the same things*, his meaning is, not that he doth always the same things, *quoad speciem*, as we say, in kind, or the same things for outward semblance, but ofttimes the same things by equivalency, things of the like value or importance. And after this manner two men may do the same things, although the things done by the one be quite contrary to the things done by the other. Every opposition to error is not a truth; for two contrary propositions (as logicians observe) may be alike false. And so may the reformation of grossest errors, whether in matter of manners or opinions, be altogether as bad as the errors or abuses which they seek to reform, if they always seek the cure of the disease by contraries. In matters of fact or manners, that saying of the poet is most true;

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt. 678

"Whilst unwise men seek to avoid one vice, they run into a contrary vice." And in matter of opinion or speculation that saying of the same poet hath been often ratified by woful experience;

In vitium ducit culpæ fuga, si caret arte.

The eschewing of one error is the highway to another, if it be done by hasty inconsiderate flight, and not according to the art and rules of a sober retreat.

The truth of what is said before is plain from the apostle's instances, ver. 21, 22, *Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?* This imports a committing of the same sin in kind for which he judged another. But when he saith, *Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?* this cannot be meant of committing the same sin in kind, but only by equivalency; for idolatry and sacrilege are contrary; the one is the fruit of superstitious zeal or blind devotion; the other of atheism. But as divers other contraries, so these two agree too well in one general, that is, in robbing God of his honour; and for this reason, as often as any sacrilegious persons, (suppose the Jews,) which robbed God in his tithes and offerings, did judge or censure the heathen for idolatry, they did condemn themselves; for they did the same, or worse. And it is generally true, that none are so rigid judges, censurers, or reformers of others, as those that are tainted with the contrary crime or fault; and no marvel, seeing the unwiser sort of men (which are the far greater part) know no other way how to eschew one vice but by running into the contrary; like that lunatic child in the gospel, sometimes falling into the water, and then soon after into the fire, which was a miserable cure of the harm received in the water: not much better is the reformation which many in our days seek to make in them-

selves or others: some, whose zeal in youth had outrun their discretion, have changed that temper into retchless profaneness; others, from a dissolute riotous course of life, have been transformed into fiery zealots, or seditious schismatics.

6. In matters spiritual, (whether concerning manners or opinion,) the natural man is no better, no wiser, than a natural fool in matters civil. And many which are in part spiritual, that is, well reformed in Christian life and manners, are but punies or novices in matters of opinion or speculation, or of small insight in the sacred art of reforming others.

As in war or battle, the strength or courage of the common soldiers is not sufficient, unless they have skilful and well experienced commanders to direct their obedience; so for the reformation of gross abuses or palpable misdemeanors in church and commonweal, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge, the best gifts of art and learning, (which for the most part are resident but in a few,) are no less requisite, than sanctity and integrity of life in the multitude that are to be governed and directed by them. To give you then the aim and scope of our apostle in this chapter: the Jews which lived in his time, or in the times betwixt the building of the second temple and our Saviour's death, did take upon them to judge their fathers, which had lived before the destruction of Solomon's temple, for transgressing the law of God; and yet by judging them most deservedly, did more manifestly condemn themselves; for they did the selfsame things, though not in kind or in particular, yet the selfsame by equivalency. And it is, if not the only or whole, yet the principal part of our apostle's intention in this chapter, 679
to prove, that even the most zealous reformers of religion amongst the Jews did the very same things which

they so mightily condemned in the heathen, or in such as were partakers with the heathens in their idolatrous services; as you may gather from the seventeenth verse unto the end of the chapter.

The truth of his general conclusion will appear, if we first shew how these later Jews did condemn themselves by judging their forefathers; or that they did the selfsame things, or worse.

That these did judge their fathers, as we say, *authoritativè*, their own speeches recorded by our Saviour will plainly witness: *If we had been* (say they) *in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.* Matt. xxiii. 30, &c. That they themselves did the same things which they condemned in their fathers, our Saviour's verdict upon their hypocrisy in thus saying puts out of question: *Fill ye up then* (saith he) *the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?* He did not command or impel them to fill up the measure of their fathers' iniquity, but only foresaw that they were desperately set to fill it up unto the brim. Now they could not fill it up but by doing the same things, or worse, than their fathers had done.

7. But wherein did their hypocrisy consist? In pretending one thing outwardly to the eyes or ears of men, and concealing another secret purpose in their hearts[x]? Did they thus speak only *ad faciendum populum*, "to gain applause amongst the people?" Did they say otherwise than in conscience they were persuaded was true, when they said, *If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been par-*

[x] See book 4. or Justifying Faith, sect. 2. [vol. iii. p. 195.]

takers with them in the blood of the prophets? No; to have spoken thus, and not to have thought so, had been gross profaneness, a branch of atheism or infidelity; whereas those men whom our Saviour thus taxes were scribes and Pharisees, and their hypocrisy was pharisaical.

The composition of hypocrisy pharisaical.

Now pharisaical hypocrisy, or *the leaven of Pharisees*, hath always some ground of truth, and a great measure of zeal, (but of zeal without knowledge or discretion,) to maintain that which it takes for truth for its ingredients.

These Pharisees (which thus spake, as truth itself relates of them) had this ground of truth for their persuasion, that if the prophets and their fathers had lived in their days, they knew themselves so free from those gross abuses which their fathers committed, that they would have taken part with the prophets against their fathers; they had the testimony of their own consciences, that they would rather have died themselves than have consented to the shedding of the prophets' blood upon the same motives or occasions which drew their fathers to shed it.

How then did they make up the measure of their fathers' iniquity? or accomplish their sin in shedding the prophets' or other innocent blood? By their distempered zeal to maintain their rigid reformation of the most gross and palpable abuses which their fathers had committed, and for which especially they had been plagued by God. The diseases themselves they knew (by God's heavy hand upon their fathers) to be most dangerous; and whilst they seek to cure the same diseases, or prevent like plagues, by practices quite contrary to the practices of their fathers, they secretly nurse more grievous diseases, and bring more grievous plagues upon themselves and upon their posterity.

Two special sins of the ancient Jews.

680 8. The two special sins for which their fathers had been plagued, and which did include the most gross and most palpable breach of God's commandments that can be imagined, were idolatry, and open violation of the sabbath.

These were sins, not only gross and palpable in themselves, but sins transcendent, such as did open a wide gap or sluice unto other sins, as well against the first as the second table; sins wherein they did most properly participate with the heathens and infidels. Their idolatry exceeded the height of heathenish superstition; and sabbath breach was the root of more than heathenish profaneness.

Now that the ancient Jews, as well those of Judah as of Israel, were remarkably plagued for their idolatry, as for a grand or capital transgression, all men know that read the scripture. That they were likewise plagued in particular for the profanation of the sabbath, we may gather from Nehemiah, chap. xiii. 17, 18: *Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.*

Their fathers had been so deeply tainted with this pestilent disease, that their posterity were not cleansed from it by seventy years' captivity in the land of Chaldæa, but it breaks forth again immediately upon their return unto the city and land of their fathers, which in their absence had enjoyed its sabbaths, for it had lien for the most part waste and untilled.

As these two sins of idolatry and profanation were most gross, so this people's delight in them before this captivity was great; and the more they delighted in

them, the more impatient they were of reproof; and the more impatient they were of reproof, the more still they were enraged against God's prophets that did tax their persons, or oppose their practices.

Now as their plagues for these transgressions had been grievous, so their posterity, after Nehemiah's time, were more zealous and severe in the reformation of idolatry, and breach of sabbath, than of any other transgressions. So strictly did they in aftertimes observe the sabbath, that they made a conscience of defending themselves against the violent assaults of their enemies upon the sabbath day, and did choose rather to die than to pollute the sabbath by making up the breaches made in their walls or fortifications, as ye may gather, 1 Maccab. ii. And Plutarch (in his book *De Superstitione*) taxes them for their folly; (as Juvenal, Sat. xiv. 96, scorns them for observing the rest of the day:

> Quidam sortiti metuentem sabbata patrem,. . . .
> Judaica ediscunt quæ jura volumine Moses
> Tradidit arcano: cui septima quæque fuit lux
> Ignava, et partem vitæ non attigit ullam.)

Their fathers sinned grievously in taking that liberty upon the sabbath which the law of God had denied them. These later Jews sin in refusing to use that liberty which God had in some cases allowed them, or at least in applauding themselves for their strict reformation, and condemning others which in matter of doctrine or practice opposed them. And this their fervent zeal to maintain their own rigid reformation, did in the issue draw them to worse practices than their fathers had committed in their grossest profanation of the sabbath. Their fathers were not at any time more violently bent against Isaiah, Jeremiah, or others of God's prophets, who taxed their scandalous breach of

The ancient Jews' sins. The later Jews' reformation.

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the sabbath, than these later Jews were bent against our Saviour for not complying with them in their rigid reformation of former abuses. Their fathers were not more apt to persecute the prophets, as peevish disturbers of their peace, by reproving their profaneness, than these later Jews were to persecute our Saviour, for a profane fellow, or sabbath-breaker, for doing works of mercy and charity upon the sabbath; albeit he wrought all his cures without any manual labour or servile work.

9. The ancient Jews were so delighted in gross idolatry, that *they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols*, by a common consent of the king and his princes, as you may read, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17. And not herewith content, they stoned Zechariah the son of Jehoiada their high priest to death in the house of the Lord, for opposing their practice, or controlling the king's license, by a countermand from the Lord, as it is ver. 20, 21[y]. This was a prodigious fact, as the later Jews have curiously aggravated it, and his blood did cry for vengeance, even upon the later generation, which thought they had so accurately reformed their forefathers' abuses; as our Saviour tells us, Luke xi. 51: *Verily I say unto you*, IT, to wit, *the blood of Zacharias, shall be required of this generation.* But how did these Jews make up the measure of their fathers' sins which shed Zacharias' blood for dissuading them from idolatry, seeing they did detest this very fact and the occasions of it? By no other means than by overprizing their rigid reformation, and by their distempered zeal to maintain it against all that should contradict it. So far they sought to root out this sin, that they made,

[y] See a following Sermon upon that fact.

not only all causes, but all probable or remote occasions of renewing idolatry to be matter of death; yea, they did rather choose to die themselves, than to admit so much as an image or picture in their temple, or upon the walls of it, though set up but for historical or civil use. So vehemently did they distaste and loathe the very conceit of multiplicity of gods, that this their extreme opposition unto the heathens did so far missway them, as they could not be brought to admit a distinction of Persons in the Trinity. How often did they accuse our Saviour of blasphemy, for saying he was *the Son of God*, or God as well as man!

In fine, the chief matter or occasion which they took to persecute our Saviour unto death, was, for that he would not consent unto them either for doctrine or practice in their rigid reformation of those gross sins which their fathers had committed, or in their uncharitable expositions of the second or fourth commandment; he could not away with their sabbaths. Isaiah i. 13.

To omit other places for the present, that one place of St. John, chap. v. shall suffice. There you may read, ver. 8, that he had cured a man by his mere word which had been sick of a grievous infirmity thirty-eight years together. *But after the Jews knew that it was Jesus which made him whole, they sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.*

Christ's true exposition of the negative part of the fourth commandment.

And when our Saviour makes this reply, *Pater meus adhuc operatur, et ego operor*, giving them a true exposition concerning the negative precept of the sabbath, which did prohibit only works resembling the works of creation, not works resembling God's everlasting preservation of things created, they *sought*

the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God, ver. 18.

682 10. To parallel both their misdemeanors with the issues. The fathers, for love unto heathenish and sense-pleasing idolatry, did forsake their God and the service of his house wherein he had promised to dwell. These later Jews, for their delight and complacency in their known freedom from these and the like particular sins of their fathers, solemnly forsake and utterly disclaim the same God, even when, according to his promise made to Moses, he had his tabernacle among them, and did walk with them (as the ancient Jews expected their Messias should) in visible manner. Their fathers slew their high priest in the temple; these, in killing Christ, did destroy the temple and tabernacle of God; so his body was. Thus to forsake or disclaim their Messias, they had a plausible pretence, or show of truth—that he whom they saw to be a man did take upon him that authority which was proper to God alone. For so we read, that when he said to one whom he cured of the palsy, *Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee,* the scribes and Pharisees which were then present *began to reason, saying, Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?* And for thus censuring him they presumed they had the warrant of God himself, Isaiah xliii. 25: *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* It was most true what they from this place allege, that *God alone can forgive sins.* But from this present miracle, and the manner of our Saviour's conversation here on earth, and their own wicked dealing with him, if they had compared these with the words immediately precedent in the

prophet, ver. 24, they might have gathered, that he was that only God which did forgive sins; for so the prophet had said unto Israel in the person of this only God: *Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.* This is one of those many places which, even by the Jews' confessions, were evidently meant of God himself, and yet were never literally and punctually fulfilled or verified but of God incarnate. For God did never serve with this people's sins, was never weary with their iniquities, save only whilst *he took the form of a servant upon him*, and bare their sins in his flesh, or human nature.

11. To recollect more briefly the manner how these later Jews did the same things for which they judged their fathers, albeit their practices and dispositions were for the most part clean contrary, as also by what means they were drawn to make up the measure of their forefathers' sins by shedding innocent blood, it is thus: The ancient Jews did shed the blood of the prophets, specially because they severely taxed their idolatry and breach of sabbath; but the true reason why they shed their blood for taxing them, in these particulars, was, because these and the like practices, wherein they complied with neighbour nations, were the most predominant and plausible humours of those times, and did command all their other desires or affections. These later Jews did kill the King of prophets for opposing the practices of intended reformation; but the reason why they crucified him for opposing them, especially in the rigid reformation of these two sins, was, because secret pride, and desire of applause amongst the people which professed true religion, was most predominant in these times of reformation, and did oversway all other desires in the Pharisees. Both of them commit the selfsame sins even whilst they

follow contrary practices, because both of them had made themselves servants to their unruly desires, and would not obey the truth, but were enraged against it, whensoever it fell cross upon the desire, which, for the time being, was most sovereign, and had the prerogative in their affections.

Take we heed of condemning ourselves by judging the later Jews.

683 12. Thus you see how these later Jews condemned themselves by judging their forefathers, even for the most abominable facts or errors committed by them. Let us beware, lest we condemn not ourselves by judging these later Jews, especially at this time of solemn remembrance of his death, wherein we are bound to examine and judge ourselves, every man his own self, not any other man, of what religion or sect soever. What then? May we not say or think that these later Jews did most grievously sin, (more grievously than their forefathers had done,) in that they put the Lord of life to death? God forbid that we should not thus far censure them! But thus far to censure them, and no farther, is not to judge them, it is such a preparative or precedent rule for right examining or judging ourselves, as Ahab's sentence against the prophet, whom he mistook for a soldier, or David's against the supposed rich man which had taken his neighbour's sheep, was to judge and condemn themselves: but say not in your hearts as these later Jews did, 'If we had lived in the days of Herod and Pilate we would not have been partakers with them, or with the Pharisees, scribes, or priests, in murdering that Just and Holy One.'

I know there is not any amongst you but will say in his heart, 'I thank God I am for the present better affected towards Christ than these later Jews were, which put him to death;' and whilst ye thus say, charity commands me to think that you speak no otherwise than you think, than you are verily per-

suaded in heart. Yet let me entreat you not to make this or the like persuasion any part of that rule by which you are to examine and judge yourselves.

What other rule then is there left?

Surely for examining ourselves, whether we be greater friends or greater enemies unto Christ than these later Jews were, there can be no other certain rule besides our conformity or nonconformity to the will of Christ[z].

Every personal wrong is so much the greater or less, as it more or less contradicts the good pleasure of him that is wronged, if so his will be regulated by reason, or be a constant rule of goodness, as we all believe our Saviour's will was.

That saying of the poet may be true in some cases of divinity,

Invitum qui servat idem facit occidenti.

He that persuades a man, ready to die upon good, to live upon evil terms, doth wrong him no less than he that should kill him when he was desirous to live.

Our Saviour taxes St. Peter more sharply for dissuading him from laying down his life for us, than he did the scribes, priests, and Pharisees for putting him to a lingering, cruel, and disgraceful death, than he did Judas for betraying him. For upon this occasion he said to Peter, *Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.* Peter's sin had been as great as Judas's sin, if it had been as habituated and unrelenting, or if he should have gathered forces for his rescue. For however death (such a disgraceful, cruel, and lingering death as our Saviour suffered) was bitter unto him, and went much against his human will; or however it more displeased him

[z] See the fourth chapter of this book. [vol. x. p. 43.]

that the Jews, his own people, should be willing to put him to death, than the sufferings of death did; yet he was comparatively far more willing to suffer the extremity of death, and whatsoever they could inflict upon him besides, than to leave the works of the devil undissolved, either in them or in us; either in all of us, or in any one of us. *For this purpose,* saith St. John,
684 *the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil,* 1 John iii. 8. What were these works of the devil which he was willing to dissolve, though it were by dissolution of his soul from his body? These were sins of all sorts, original and actual; or more punctually, thus[a]: the main work of Satan, which the Son of God came to dissolve, and did by his death actually dissolve, for all and every one of us, was that bond of servitude which Satan by right of conquest had gotten over our first parents and us. All of us by right of this conquest were born slaves of Satan, until the Son of God, by right of conquest over Satan obtained in our flesh, did make us again the servants of God *de jure.*

He took away the right of Satan, and established his own over us. We are his servants by peculiar purchase. Now if any man whom the Son of God hath redeemed from this slavery unto Satan (and thus far he hath redeemed all) shall return to Satan's service, and abandon the true service of Christ, he wrongs him more than the Jews did which put him to death; because he was more willing to die for every one of us, than to suffer the works of Satan to be undissolved, or to be accomplished in any of us.

13. All of us, even from our cradles, have learned to take up the name of a Jew as a proverb; and can take the boldness upon us (as occasion serves) to cen-

[a] See book viii. [vol. vii. p. 377, &c.]

sure the scribes and Pharisees which put our Lord and Saviour to death, as patterns of envy, malice, hypocrisy, and cruelty. But were not these very Jews as forward and free to censure their forefathers (to whom they owed more respect than we do to them) for idolatry, profaneness, and guilt of innocent blood? and thus they censured them without dissimulation or affected zeal. And yet in thus judging their fathers they did condemn themselves, for they did the same things, or worse. But you will say, it is not possible that we should do the same things which these later Jews did, or worse things than they did: for Christ cannot be buffeted, cannot be spit upon, cannot be crucified again. Yet may we do those things (and would to God ofttimes we did them not!) which are more displeasing to him, now enthroned in heaven as King, than all that the Jews did unto him whilst he was in form of a servant here on earth.

It was not the evil which the Jews did to him as to their professed enemy, but the evil which was in themselves, as their pride, envy, hypocrisy, uncharitable censuring of others, which made him that made them to be their enemy, and him that had been their protector to fight against them. These are diseases not proper to the Jewish nation, but epidemical and common to all nations and places. The matter of them (as our apostle in this chapter disputes) is alike common to all. But the Jewish nation came to their crisis at Christ's first appearance in humility. Our critical day is not to be expected until his second appearing in majesty and glory: then, nothing which lies hid in the heart but shall be laid open; then, and not before, will all enmity betwixt the serpent and the woman's seed appear. And in that day it shall be more tolerable for them which crucified him than for

us, unless we take warning, by God's known judgments upon them and their seed, to avoid those practices and accustomances which wrought and swayed them, by means secret and unsensible, to exercise enmity and hostility against their Lord, their Maker, and Redeemer.

14. And here my purpose was to have used the
685 former parallel betwixt the ancient Jews which killed the prophets, and the later, which, condemning them for so doing, did notwithstanding kill our Saviour, as a map, whereby to shew you in what particulars many in this land, who not content with that discreet and judicious reformation which is contained in the public acts and liturgy of our church, by their solicitous care and anxious zeal to be extremely contrary unto the Romish church almost in all things, do by judging her and her children condemn themselves doing the very same things, or worse things than she doth, and help to make up that measure of iniquity upon this land which the Romish religion, whilst it was here authorized, had left unaccomplished; but for this point, and others which serve for use and application of the general doctrine hitherto delivered, this present time will not suffice. The application shall be brief. Take heed you measure not your love to truth by your opposition unto error. If hatred of error and superstition spring from sincere love of truth and true religion, the root is good, and the branch is good. But if your love to truth and true religion spring from hatred to others' error and superstition, the root is naught, and the branch is naught; there can no other fruit be expected but hypocrisy, hardness of heart, and uncharitable censuring others.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

The Second Sermon upon this Text.

ROMANS II. 1.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, &c.

1. The points worthy our consideration are three:

First, how our foreelders in the beginning of reformation, and many amongst us since the reformation established, did or do condemn themselves whilst they judge the Romish church in particulars worthy of condemnation by all.

Secondly, how the Romish church in general, and many professing reformed religion, condemn themselves, even whilst they judge the Jews in points most gross and damnable.

Thirdly, how not the Romish church only, or the Jewish synagogue, but many amongst professors of true religion, men in opinion orthodoxal, evidently condemn themselves, whilst they judge or censure the very idolatry of the heathen.

The points for which one church or nation, one sort of people or generation of men may judge another, either concern matters of manners and practice, or matters of opinion and doctrine, or matters mixed, that is, errors in opinion, which induce misdemeanours in practice. If errors there be any which do not draw after them dangerous or ungodly practices, these rather deserve pity or toleration, than rigid censure. But doctrinal errors, which induce lewd practices, are more dangerous, more to be detested, than the most gross or lewdest practices into which some men fall, being not misled or drawn into them by plausible errors or false

doctrine. Practices, how gross soever, if they want
686 the supportance or countenance of doctrinal rules, pollute the souls and consciences of the parties peccant, they are not so powerful to seduce others. But misdemeanours, or perverse affections, being countenanced by pretence or colour of sacred authority, are most infectious. Briefly, there is no false doctrine but it is an inconvenience, whereas grosser misdemeanours, without error in doctrine, are but mischiefs. And it is a maxim received by the most sage and prudent, that better is a mischief than an inconvenience, or at least an inconvenience is worse than a mischief. But worst of all is an inconvenience which draws mischief after it; and such is every error in doctrine which inclines or disposes men to evil practices, or which doth leaven or malignify the affections of the heart, naturally bad or but indifferent.

That which our foreelders did most condemn in the Romish church, or at least that which they went about to reform, was the excessive wealth which the church or clergy had gotten into their possession, with the transcendent authority of the papacy, by which they sought to detain what they had gotten, or to gather more.

Whatever the manner of getting their wealth or revenues was, the manner of using or employing them was exceeding bad, and did deserve, yea, require a reformation. Our foreelders did well in judging the clergy for abusing revenues sacred, to the maintenance of idleness, superstition, and idolatry. But would to God they had not condemned themselves by judging them, or that they had not done the same things wherein they judged them! Happy had it been for them and for their posterity, if those large revenues which they took from such as abused them, had been

employed to pious uses; as, either to the maintenance of true religion, or to the support of the needy, or to prevent oppressing by extraordinary taxes, or the like. This had been an undoubted effect of *pure religion and undefiled before God.* But it was not the different estate or condition of the parties on whom church revenues were bestowed, that could give warrant unto their alienation, or which might bring a blessing upon their intended reformation, but the uses unto which they were consecrated, or the manner how they were employed.

Now the manner of their employment, no man, whose ancestors have been parties in this business, will take upon him to justify. Nor have the posterity of such as were at that time most enriched with the spoils of the superstitious church, any great cause to rejoice at their ancestors' easy purchase. It was a practice just and right, as being authorized by God himself, that the Israelites should despoil the Egyptians of their costly ear-rings and gaudy jewels. But albeit the Israelites, who were the borrowers, had better right unto them than the Egyptians, which did lend them; yet much better had it been if the Egyptians had either not lent them, or after the loan recovered them, than that they should have afforded, as they did, both matter and opportunity for erecting golden calves in Israel. And of two evils it had been the less, if the church's revenues had been possessed by their first owners, and not been misemployed in riot, luxury, and other branches of profaneness, whereby the measure of this land's iniquity was rather augmented than diminished; however, the nutriment of superstition and idolatry was by this means abated. But be our forefelder's fault, if not in alienating, yet in misemploying church revenues, as it may be, worse than superstition,

equivalent to idolatry itself; it was in no wise the fault of reformed religion, nor of the reformers of it;
687 it must be charged upon the maintainers of superstition: for at the dissolution of abbeys and other religious houses, there was no public reformation of religion attempted, save only the denial or abjuration of the pope's transcendent authority, and restauration of the king unto his ancient and hereditary right of jurisdiction in causes ecclesiastic. Nor was that boisterous king so much to blame in dissolving material temples or houses, (rather abused than consecrated to superstition,) as he was after this reformation (if so it may be called) in destroying so many living temples of God, which sought not the dissolution of his kingdom, nor any other reformation of him and his people, save only the clearing and purifying of their hearts and breasts (which had been consecrated unto God's service) from the infection of Romish superstition and idolatry.

2. Idolatry was that which in the first place required reformation, because it did pollute the whole service of God. And I think it would be hard to find any generation of Christian men, since the first plantation of Christianity, which did more abhor idols, or adoration of images in the church, than the first reformers of that religion which we now profess did: witness those learned homilies against the Peril of Idolatry. And yet, would to God that many of those times of high authority, and most zealously forward in the work of reformation, had not condemned themselves by judging the Romish church, or their forefelders which lived in it; or that our apostle's censure of the Jews' hate or opposition unto Gentilism had not fallen as jump and fit upon the times of Edward the Sixth, as it did upon the times and people to whom

it was first purposely fitted! Our foreelders (especially the nobility and gentry of those times) did abhor idols no less than the Jews did, and yet did commit more gross and palpable sacrilege than the Jews, to my observation, at any time had done.

And what could it boot them to deface images or pull down idols in the material churches, so long as by their very spoils they nourished that great idol, covetousness, in their own hearts? Thus to seek to enrich themselves, or fill their private coffers with the spoils of abbeys or churches, or by tithes and offerings, was but to continue the practice of the prelacy or clergy, in destroying parishes to erect monasteries; or demolishing lesser religious houses to build up others more sumptuous, more luxurious.

3. Many at this day there be which out of zeal complain that the laws against superstition and idolatry are not severe enough; and there is no moderate man (unless of the Romish faction) but could wish that such laws as have been made for suppressing the growth of it were more constantly, more impartially executed than they are. In all this, neither of them are to blame. And yet by soliciting God's cause, and the cause of true religion, against the maintainers of superstition and idolatry, we shall but solicit our own condemnation, unless we bear a like zealous desire and good affection for the depressing and rooting out of all sacrilegious practices or opinions. And yet seriously to attempt the reformation of this foul sin, which is equivalent to idolatry, and hath the same burden of God's curse, would be a matter (I am persuaded) as full of difficulty and danger in this land, as to attempt the defacing of images in the church of Rome, or in any province subject to her jurisdiction. But the further prosecution of this point would better befit an

audience of statesmen, of parliament-men, or lawyers, than this place or audience. Only let me forewarn you that your predecessors have been grievous offend-
688 ers in this kind, witness the short revenues or poor endowments of your goodly churches.

4. But this sin of sacrilege or church robbing hath been, though not common to all, yet in a manner peculiar to such as exercise the coactive power of reformation. The clergy, in whom the power directive was, did either not at all or unwillingly partake with them in this offence; they have been and are the patients, that is, the men which suffer wrong, not doers of wrong in this kind. And if we set aside those points of Romish religion which did not come to opposition or counterpoise with power royal, or with the interest of potentates, or commodities of private men, the reformation made by our foreelders in other points of doctrine was judicious and religious: they did no way condemn themselves by judging the Romish church: the judgment which they exercised was the judgment of the Lord: the reformation which they intended and accomplished was the Lord's doing. But many which have enjoyed the benefit of that wholesome reformation, and of true Christian liberty restored by it, have not submitted themselves, their opinions or practices, to the laws or rules prescribed by it. Many have taken upon them, and yet do, not only to judge or censure the Romish church, but even to condemn the reformation of their ancestors, as if it did to this day savour of the superstition from which it was severed: of those men I only speak, which out of an hatred, antipathy, or loathing the Romish church, do cast themselves out of all churches, and will be members of none, unless they may be heads of some one new one of their own making, or of some that

hath no real pattern or model, save only in their own busy heads or brains.

A Romish error requiring reformation.

5. To instance in some particular errors into which the very hate of Romish errors hath transported them, one of the most weighty masses of popery which required reformation and refining, was, that they made the church, which in their language was the body of the clergy, a body politic, or kingdom distinct from the body of the laity; holding even Christian kings and emperors to be magistrates merely temporal or civil, altogether excluded from meddling in affairs ecclesiastic. Now this being granted, the supreme majesty of every kingdom, state, or nation, should be wholly seated in the clergy; the greatest kings and Christian monarchs on earth should be but mere vassals to the ecclesiastic hierarchy; or, at the most, in such subordination to it, as foreign generals and commanders in chief are to the states or sovereignties which employ them, who may displace them at their pleasure, whensoever they shall transgress, or not execute their instructions or commissions. For this reason, (as in the handling of the first verses of the 13th chapter of the epistle to the Romans hath been declared unto you before,) all the disputes or laws concerning the supremacy of kings or free states, within their own dominions, were to no purpose, unless this root of mischief and rebellion be taken away, which makes the clergy a body politic, or commonweal ecclesiastic, altogether distinct from the laity Christian. Now this erroneous root of mischief hath been well removed by the Articles of Religion established in this church and land, article the 37th, wherein the same authority and power is expressly given to the kings of this realm, and their successors, which was in use and practice amongst the kings of Judah and the Christian empe-

rors, when kingdoms and commonweals did first become Christian. The law of God and of nature will not suffer the sovereign power in causes ecclesiastic to be divorced from the supreme majesty of any kingdom, or free sovereignty, truly Christian.

689 But what be the contrary errors into which such as take upon them to be reformers of the reformation already made, have run headlong? or how do they the same things wherein they judge the Romanists? The Romanists (as they well observe) deserve condemnation by all Christian states for appropriating the name or sovereign dignity of *the church* unto the clergy, and by making the prerogative of priests and prelates to be above the prerogatives of kings and princes. The contrary faction of reformers, not content to deprive the clergy of those civil immunities and privileges wherewith the law of God, the law of nations, and the fundamental law of this kingdom have endowed them, will have them to be no true members of the commonweal or kingdom wherein they live; or at the best, but such inferior members of the commonweal as the papists make the laity to be of the church; men that shall have no voice in making those coercive laws by which they are to be governed and to govern their flocks; yea, men that shall not have necessary voices in determining controversies of religion, or in making rules and canons for preventing schism. I should have been afraid to believe thus much of any sober man, professing Christianity, unless I had seen a book to this purpose, perused (as is pretended in the frontispiece) by the learned in the laws. But the author hath wisely concealed his own name, and the names of those learned in the laws, which are (in gross) pretended for its approbation; and therefore I shall avoid suspicion of aiming at any particular out

An error of the contrary extreme, disparaging the reformation.

A factious schismatical book modestly censured.

of misaffection to his person, in passing this general censure: "No man could have had the heart to write it, no man the face to read it, without blushing or indignation, but he that was altogether unlearned, and notoriously ignorant, in the law of God, in the law of nature, and in the fundamental points of Christianity."

6. All errors in this kind proceed from these originals:

First, the authors of them (charity may hope, by incogitancy or want of consideration, rather than out of malice) seek to subject the clergy unto the same rule unto which the church was subject for the first 300 years after Christ, during which time the kings and emperors under which the Christians lived, were heathens. And whilst the chief governors were such, no Christians could exercise coercive authority, as to fine, imprison, or banish any that did transgress the laws of God or of the church. The apostles themselves could use no other manner of punishment, besides delivering up to Satan, excommunication, or inhibition from hearing the word, or receiving the sacraments.

Apostolical and episcopal power under heathen princes, and after princes were Christianed.

Secondly, the authors of the former errors consider not, that whilst the church was in this subjection to mere civil and not Christian power, the lay Christians of what rank soever, though noblemen by birth, were as straitly confined and kept under, as were the clergy. Yea, the clergy in those times had greater authority over lay-Christians than any other men had; authority much greater over the greatest, than any besides the Romish prelates do this day challenge over the meanest of their flocks. But after kings and emperors and other supreme magistrates were once converted to the Christian faith, their dignities were no whit abated, but gained this addition to their former titles, that they were held supreme magistrates in

causes ecclesiastic; that is, they had power of calling councils and synods for quelling schism and heresies
690 in the church; power likewise to punish the transgressors of such laws or canons as had been made by former godly bishops or prelates which lived under heathen states; or of such as the bishops or clergy, which lived under their government, should make for the better government of Christ's church. Unto punishments merely spiritual, which the apostles and bishops had formerly only used, Christian emperors added punishments temporal, as, imprisonment of body, loss of goods, exile, or death; according to the nature and quality of the transgression. But that any laws or canons were made by Christian kings or emperors for the government of the church, or that any controversies in religion were determined, without the express suffrages and consents of bishops and pastors, though always ratified by the sovereignty of the nation or state for whom such canons were made, no man, until these days wherein we live, did ever question.

7. And of such as question or oppose episcopal authority in these cases, I must say, (as once before out of this place in like case I did,) "If heathen they be in heart, and would persuade the laity again to become heathens, their resolutions are Christian;" at least their conclusions are such as a good Christian living under heathens would admit. But if Christians they be in heart and profession, their conclusions are heathenish, or worse. For what heathen did ever deny their priests the chief stroke or sway in making laws or ordinances concerning the rites or service of their gods, or in determining points controverted in religion? To conclude this point; the men that seek to be most contrary to the Romish church, and are most

The ancient heathens gave, and Turks give, more to their priests than some professing Christianity do to theirs, both for power and maintenance.

forward to judge her for enlarging the prerogative of priesthood beyond its ancient bounds, do the same things she doth, by equivalency, and run to the same end by a quite contrary way. The Romish church (it cannot be denied) makes her popes and prelates, with other pillars of their church, plain idols. They which out of an indiscreet and furious zeal seem most to abhor this kind of idolatry, commit sacrilege, and rob God of his honour, as the Romish church doth. And he that robs God of his honour doth the very same thing, and no other, which an idolater doth. Now they are said in scripture to rob God of his honour, and to commit an abomination more than heathenish, (for the heathen do not spoil their gods,) which defraud him of his tithes and offerings, which were due unto the priest for his ministration and service in God's house. But they rob God of his honour more immediately and more directly, which despise or contemn his ambassadors, not in word only, but in taking that authority from them which he hath expressly given unto them, and, which is worst of all, in seeking to alienate it unto them over whom he hath in matter of salvation appointed them guides and overseers.

A precept will be in force, when pretences will be out of date.

That precept of our apostle I am sure will stand good, when all laws or intendments of laws to confront it will fail: *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves,* Heb. xiii. 17.

What *rule* doth he mean? merely civil or temporal? No. What then? ecclesiastic? Not that only, but the rule of government spiritual, such as is proper to the bishops of the church: for so it follows; *for they* (to whom you are to submit yourselves) *watch for your souls, as they that must give account;* and you are therefore to obey, *that they may do it with joy, and*

not with grief: for that (saith the apostle) *is unprofitable for you.*

Now that in this plenty of preaching and frequency in hearing the most hearers profit so little in the
691 school of Christ, the true reason is, for that men do not submit themselves unto their pastors in such sort as they ought, but think it his duty or office only to preach, and their duty only to hear, not to be ruled or governed by him; whereas the one's preaching is vain, and the other's hearing is vain, unless this duty of obedience be first planted in their hearts. The pastor's grief, which ariseth from neglect or contempt of this duty, will prove in the issue the people's curse.

The main error of the Romish church, infallibility; both in expounding holy scripture, and in attesting traditions. See the second and third books.

8. But the main stream of popery, from which the name of ***Babylon*** is derived unto Rome, was the absolute infallibility of the Romish church representative.

The branches of this supposed absolute infallibility were two:

The first, that the sense of scriptures which that church doth maintain or avouch concerning faith or manners, is always authentic, undoubted, and true.

But whereas many points, as well of doctrine as practice, concerning faith and manners, were in that church established by prescription and use, without so much as any pretence of warrant from scripture; they were enforced, in the second place, to maintain, that the unwritten traditions of the church were of equal authority with the scriptures, and that the present church was as infallible in her testimony of the one, as in her judgment of the other. The infallible consequence of which supposed infallibility is this, that the people were absolutely to believe whatsoever that church should propound unto them as a point of faith or practice commendable, and to abjure whatsoever that church should condemn for heresy or un-

godliness. By absolute belief or obedience, they intend a belief or obedience, not only without condition or scruple in the first undertaking, but without reservation of appeal, upon any new discovery of dangers unseen, unsuspected, in the first undertaking. The church's authority once declared, was, in their divinity, sufficient to quell or put to silence all succeeding replies or mutterings of conscience.

The two former Romish errors well reformed.

Both these dangerous errors were well reformed; the later stream or puddle of traditions in a manner drained by this church and state. For every bishop at his consecration doth solemnly promise or vow, not to propound any thing to the people, as a point of faith, unless it be either expressly contained in the scripture, or may be thence deduced by necessary inference. To bind or tie all bishops thus solemnly unto the observance of this rule, the wisdom of those times had these reasons: not only to curb or restrain the licentious abuse of bishops' former authority, but because they knew that the people were in many cases (concerning the service of God, and other Christian duties) bound to yield more credence and obedience to their bishops and pastors, than unto men not called to sacred or pastoral function. It is one thing to believe any doctrinal proposition as a point of faith necessary to salvation; another, to believe it so far as we may safely adventure upon any practice or duty enjoined by superiors; that is, to believe it, not absolutely, but conditionally, and out of such belief to obey them, not absolutely, but conditionally, that is, with reservation of freedom or liberty, when either the truth shall be better discovered than now it is, or greater dangers appear than for the present we do suspect. The obedience which we give unto superiors may be *ex fide*, of faith, albeit the points of doctrine, or the persuasions

out of which we yield this obedience, be not *de fide*, no points of faith, or necessary to salvation.

9. But a great many well-meaning men there were, who, shortly after this happy reformation, could not
692 content themselves to stand upon such sure terms of contradiction unto the Romish church as the first reformers had done; but sought in this point (which was indeed above all others to be abhorred) to be most extremely contrary unto her.

The temper and bounds of the right and rigid reformer.

Wherein then doth that contradiction to the Romish church, (wherein the first reformers of religion did entrench themselves,) and wherein doth the extreme contrariety whereunto others, more rigid reformers if they could have effected their projects, would have drawn this church and land, consist?

The Romish church, as you heard before, did make unwritten traditions a part of the rule of faith, as sovereign as the written word of God, and did obtrude those observances which had no other warrant than such tradition as altogether necessary to salvation.

The cure of the error by the right mean.

The first reformers of this error were contented to contradict them only in this. And their contradiction is expressly maintained, partly in the Articles of Religion, partly in the book of Consecration of Bishops. The contradiction is this: that all things necessary to salvation are contained in scripture; which is all one as to say, that the scripture is the only rule of faith. Yet did they not, for all this, utterly reject all use of tradition or ceremonies, as you may find expressed in the thirty-fourth article, in which, though rites and ceremonies, or other customs of the church, be not enjoined in particular (as they take for granted) by God himself, yet obedience is due unto them in particular, and they which disobey or transgress them in any particular are to be punished or made examples,

lest others be emboldened to do the like. And the reason why they would have such punished (which I would request you to observe) is, lest their impunity should minister offence to the weak brethren; and a man cannot give greater offence to the weak or ignorant, than by emboldening them to disobedience, in cases wherein obedience is due.

But soon after these public injunctions, other private spirits rose up, which, out of desire to be extremely contrary to the Romish church concerning traditions, did expressly contradict their lawful governors in that article.

The error extremely contrary to the Romish error.

The contrary error into which they run (by seeking to avoid the error of the Romish church) was in brief this; that no Christian man is bound to obey superiors in matters of sacred rite or ceremony, or in duties of ordinary practice, unless their governors, or such as demand their obedience, can shew them express authority of scripture; or can convince their understandings that God by his word doth enjoin them to obey in these particulars.

But thus to oppose the Romish church by way of contrariety, is but to seek the overthrow of a tyranny by the erection of an anarchy. For if the flock or inferior members of the church owe no obedience unto their superiors but upon these terms, then pastors, prelates, yea, kings, should owe the same obedience unto the meanest tradesmen or daylabourers, that tradesmen or daylabourers owe to them. For pastors and prelates, even kings themselves, are bound to obey the word of God, by whomsoever it shall be manifested or made known unto them, and to obey it in every particular which it manifestly enjoins. And if obedience were not due to pastors, prelates, and kings in matters concerning the service of God, or sacred rites,

until they can shew warrant for every particular which they enjoin out of God's word, there were no obedience at all due unto them, but unto God's word only; and every man might say to them as the emperor said to the pope, *Non tibi sed Petro.* But so,
693 the sacred rule of faith and manners should be, not the author of such order as we believe it is, but an occasion of confusion in every Christian estate or congregation.

10. But this is the happiness of the English church or clergy, that all the arguments which have been or can be brought by factious or discontented spirits in matters of rites, ceremonies, or discipline, do draw their strength from such false or mistaken principles, as if way were given to their growth, or exercise of their force, they could not peck the least hole in the mitre, or make the least thirl in the surplice, without working a proportionable crack or flaw in the royal crown; their authors' disobedience to laws or discipline ecclesiastic would quickly induce, if opportunity served, open rebellion against the prerogative royal.

Reason and experience had taught the heathen statesmen, that it was a matter of like sufferance, or equally insufferable, to live *ubi omnia licita, et ubi nihil licitum;* in a state wherein all must be subject to the will of one man, and in a place where every man may do what he will. A tyrant is like a ravenous beast, which devours all that comes within his walk or range, but which there are many ways for a wise man to escape. But if a tyranny once dissolve into an anarchy, *homo homini fit lupus*, every man becomes a wolf unto his neighbour; their habitations or places of meeting become but nests of wasps or serpents.

11. Let Rome then be accounted as it was when our forefathers departed from it, and as it still remains,

the spiritual Babylon; let the pope be a tyrant more cruel and barbarous than Nebuchadnezzar or Belshazzar; yet let us remember, that when God called his people out of Babylon, he called them unto Jerusalem, which is by interpretation *the vision of peace;* a city, as the psalmist in the literal sense perhaps meant, *compacted;* but in the mystical or emblematical sense, *a city at unity in itself.* The long durance of an hard and foreign yoke had taught them subjection unto their native governors, Zerubbabel their prince, and Jesus their high priest. The hatred, contempt, and scorn, which they had endured amongst barbarous aliens, was a cement to unite their hearts in brotherly affections. But we, by misemploying our peace and security of dread from the enemy, have turned the grace of God into wantonness[b], and transformed that Christian liberty, which our forefathers purchased with their ashes, into such licentiousness, as if we had departed out of Babylon to build a Babel in Jerusalem. How have our printing-houses become the cells and arsenals of strife and contention, and our pulpits been made Babels, or towers of confusion! When the men which came from the east attempted to build a tower unto heaven, God, as you know, confounded their language, that they could not understand one another, and the enterprise was dissolved, and the enterprisers were dispersed over the face of the earth. *This was the Lord's doing*, and therefore it was a confusion which did not end in contention: though one of them did not understand another, yet we do not read but that every man did

[b] In his sermon before the king, upon Jer. xxvi, he saith, "Divide the sins of forty years last past into ten parts, the sins of the pulpit and the press would be a large tenth." See Signs of the Times. [vol. vi. p. 49, &c. and p. 110.]

well understand himself. But our misery is, that every one will over-understand another, when he doth not half-understand himself, or them after whereof he writes or speaks, and so raiseth contention without an adversary, and builds up a Babel without help; making a confusion, without mixture of language, only by pouring out his own simplicity, ignorance, and malice, and making no conscience of taking God's name in vain, quoting scripture to no other end than to coun-
694 tenance blasphemy, or to dazzle the eyes of the unlearned, whilst he transforms the nature and goodness of God into worse similitudes than the papists or heathen do; one while speaking against Arminians, another while unwittingly pleading for them; one page containing a comfortable use or application, whereas in the next before and after it, he hath laid the doctrinal foundations of despair, or more than desperate presumption. Thus to contradict themselves is so familiar and natural unto them, that they cannot endure to be contradicted by any others, which in the spirit of meekness would shew them the way how they might maintain all those conclusions which they so much labour for, and that without giving advantage to the adversaries, without dissension or disagreeing from themselves.

12. These are the men that must be disclaimed as no true members of the English church, or at least no fit expositors of her tenets: otherwise we shall be enforced to grant that our church participates as well of Babel or Bethaven as of Bethel. I have been the bolder to insist the longer upon this point, because some of good place and authority in the church and commonweal take notice, that some unlicensed and scandalous pamphlets, schismatical and seditious books, find nowhere better welcome or entertainment than in

this town. And wise men, I hope, will account it a work of charity rather than of cruelty, to take ratsbane from children, albeit they should long after it more greedily than after any wholesome meat. Or if any be so stubborn, as not to part with this poison by gentle persuasions, the only remedy must be to exclude them from communicating with others in the food of life. For us, dearly beloved, let us, in the bowels of Christ Jesus I beseech you, content ourselves with the reformation already established by authority. It is no time to sally out against the adversary in single bands or scattered companies; but rather with the joint forces of our united affections, of prayers and endeavours, either to batter the foundation of their church's walls, or manfully to defend our own; keeping ourselves within the bounds whereunto authority hath confined us. The common adversaries of the truth which we profess, want no strength of wit, or weapons of art, to work upon all advantages which our ignorance, negligence, indiscretion, or dissension, may present unto them. And this one great advantage they have of us, that we for the most part fight (as it were) every man upon his own head, without the advice or appointment of our chief leaders and commanders. So do not our adversaries; they have the perfect discipline of war; and I cannot but approve his wish, that either they had our vine, or we their fence. And it is a rule to be observed, as well in spiritual warfare as in any others, yea most especially in it—

..... Arma tenenti
Omnia dat qui justa negat.

By denying that to our adversaries whereto they have fair title out of God's word, or out of venerable orthodoxal antiquity, we shall but betray the true cause (which we maintain against them) in main and funda-

mental points, which if we would wisely maintain them are most defensible. Observe, I beseech you, what hath been said unto you, and the God of wisdom and of peace give you understanding in all things profitable to your salvation.

695 CHAP. XXXIX.

The third Sermon upon this Text.

ROMANS II. 1.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, &c.

A Romish error, breeding doubt of salvation, charged upon its proper evident ground; viz., their making the intention of a bishop essentially necessary to the consecration of a priest; and the intention of a priest so necessary, that no sacrament can be without it. The error of the contrarii *teaching a preposterous immature certainty of salvation. The right mean betwixt or cure of these extremities, prescribed unto us by our reformers, of blessed memory, contained in the public acts of the church.*

1. ANOTHER doctrinal point there was maintained by the Romish church, when our fathers departed from it, which required reformation. And this point contains all the several tenets of that church which did occasion or nurse doubt of salvation or perplexity of conscience in every private man, so often as he should examine his estate in grace, his hopes or interest in God's mercy, or promises to all.

Three points purposed.

First, then, by God's assistance, of the general error, or that branch of it which especially required reformation.

Secondly, of the contrary error or inconveniences

into which many by curiosity of reformation have run.

Thirdly, of the true mean or orthodoxal doctrine which the reformers of our church did hold and maintain, and have delivered unto us in the public acts of the church, approved and ratified by the general consent of this kingdom.

A Romish error, causing doubt of salvation; viz., the intention of the priest, &c.

The error of the Romish church was doubt of salvation: with this error that church hath been often charged by all the best writers of reformed churches. But sometimes, or by some men in those churches, not upon so evident ground as it might be charged: for some there be which charge this error directly upon their tenet concerning the nature of faith or hope.

But, for their defence, if we join issue with them upon those terms, they have more to say than they can have, if we charge this error upon their doctrine concerning the intention of the priest in the administration of the sacraments, by whose hidden virtue faith and hope are begotten and increased. For, how much soever they may seem to magnify the sacraments of the New Testament in respect of the sacraments of the law, (as, that they confer grace upon the receivers of them *ex opere operato*, by the very sacramental action, which the sacraments of the law did not,) yet, all this being granted, no man can be more certain of his estate in grace, than he is of the good intention of the priest which administered the sacraments. Now this assurance or persuasion of the 696
priest's intention can be no sure ground of faith truly Christian.

2. The sacrament of baptism they hold to be absolutely necessary unto salvation; and that all such infants as die without baptism are excluded from the

kingdom of heaven. And yet they hold withal, that unless the priest, when he comes to baptize any infant, do intend to do what the church appoints him to do, the baptism is invalid, or of none effect, albeit he use the formal words of baptism, and apply the sacramental element to the body of the infant presented by the solemn prayers of the church or congregation present. Besides the solemn pronunciation of the words, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and the washing of the body in water, there must be *interior mentis intentio;* the "internal intention of the priest's mind" must jointly concur with the word and sacrament, or rather with the Holy Ghost, for producing the invisible grace, or gift of the Spirit, which is the proper effect of the sacrament. So that how well soever the parents, the friends and neighbours assembled, demean themselves at or before the performance of this sacred act, yet every infant brought to the sacred laver may be two ways remedilessly prejudiced by the priest, to the ruin of its soul or loss of salvation.

A Romish priest may damn an infant through neglect or malice, by the doctrine of that church.

First, it may be deprived of the fruit or benefit of this sacrament (which is by their doctrine absolutely necessary to salvation) by the mere negligence or carelessness of the priest: as in case he forget in heart or mind to intend his duty, of doing that which the church in like case usually doth or appoints to be done, whatsoever else he do or say, all is nothing, it is no baptism.

Secondly, the infant may be so far prejudiced, as is said, by the malice or impiety of the priest: as in case he be so wickedly disposed as secretly to subtract or withdraw his intention by any interposed condition or limitation, though not expressed, the baptism is in-

valid, or of no effect. To give you one of their own instances or ruled cases: if one should come to one of their priests, and request him to baptize such a man's child, naming his parents, and he shall thus with himself resolve: 'If this very child be brought unto me, I intend to do to him as the church enjoins; but if any other be presented unto me, I have no intention to baptize him, however I use the words of baptism, and wash him with water.' The resolution of their doctors is, that in case another child be brought unto the font, and not that individual child for which he was first spoken unto, he shall have no benefit by his baptism.

3. For a priest to make such secret conditions, limitations, or reservations, the Romish doctors acknowledge to be a wicked and sacrilegious part; but this is all the comfort which the infant presumed to be baptized or his parents can have, if the priest be disposed to be thus malicious. That the intention of the priest is necessarily required, not only by way of precept, or to the better administration of the sacrament, but *necessitate medii*, as a means so necessary that without it there can be no sacrament at all, not their schoolmen or private doctors only, but some of their general councils have declared[c]; for the council of Florence makes this intention of the priest to be of the very essence of the sacrament: now *essentia non suscipit magis et minus:* if the priest's intention be of the essence of this sacrament, it must be as necessary as the intention of the Holy Ghost.

And yet their later doctors are in this point more rigid than the ancient were, which lived not long after 697
the council of Florence: for Thomas of Aquine, the great master of the modern Jesuits, required only an habitual intention; his scholars, the Jesuits, always

[c] See Soto in 4. senten. dis. 1. q. 5. art. 1.

required a virtual intention, which is more than an habitual.

Again, whereas some of their doctors in ages past did think it a probable opinion, which might without censure of impiety be believed, that in case ordinary priests were negligent or otherwise defective in the administration of the sacraments, the High Priest of our souls (to wit, Christ Jesus) might or would supply their defect or negligence: Zuares, a late great doctor in that church, censures the author of this opinion for his zeal without discretion. And Soto, another great doctor, who was present at the council of Trent, peremptorily denies all relief or remedy from Christ to any infant, in case the priest will be so wicked, as either not to intend to do what the church doth appoint, or to withdraw his intention or purpose to do him good by baptizing him. If the priest purpose to remit his sins by baptism, they are remitted by Christ: if he purpose not to remit them, but to retain them, they are not remitted, but retained by Christ.

4. Besides the sacrament of baptism and the sacrament of the Lord's supper, which two the reformed churches only acknowledge instituted by Christ, as generally necessary to salvation, the Romish church presseth three other upon all lay-people, as necessary unto their salvation, *ex necessitate præcepti*, that is, they are bound in duty to receive them, and in case they omit them when they may have them, they forfeit their interest in God's promises. And those are, the sacrament of confirmation, the sacrament of absolution upon confession, and the sacrament of extreme unction. These make a plausible show or pretence that the Romish church hath greater store of means for salvation, or for conferring grace, than reformed churches have. But how well soever God by their

doctrine hath provided for their church, in granting it such a multitude of sacraments, and such an extraordinary manner by which their supposed sacraments confer grace upon such as receive them, yet, when all is done, they grant a negative voice to the priest in the distribution of all sacramental grace; and such a negative as is not usual in other cases: for all other governors of human societies, whether ecclesiastic or civil, have only a negative voice, which if they do not expressly use, their silence is interpreted for a grant or testification of their consent unto the business proposed. But albeit the priest profess his consent unto the sacramental act, by pronouncing the sacramental words, yet if he be pleased, by secret condition or tacit limitation, to withdraw the consent of mind or spirit from his external act or words pronounced by him, the Spirit of God shall want his influence upon the souls of such as receive the sacrament. And as they grant a negative unto every ordinary priest in the distribution of sacramental grace unto the laity, so they give the like negative unto the bishop or prelate in the distribution of sacramental grace unto their priests. For the ordination of priests is in their doctrine a sacrament of the new law or gospel; and of this sacrament, the intention of the bishop or prelate which administereth it is an essential part. If the bishop, either through negligence or maliciousness, do not afford his secret intention or consent, the ordination of the priest is invalid; the words pronounced by him or imposition of hands doth imprint no character upon his soul; and without this character, he is no priest.

Romish priests have a strange negative voice.

5. And here by the way you may inform your- 698
selves, why such as are contented in all points to believe as the Romish church believeth, have their

own priests or prelates in such esteem or estimation as no other people besides have their lawful governors. The true reason is, not any extraordinary worth in their persons, but this strange kind of power or authority, which were it true, or where it is acknowledged to be true, might justly exact double honour, more than human, even both parts of that honour which the heathens respectively gave unto their several gods. Some gods the heathens honoured with placatory sacrifices, lest being neglected they should do them harm: other gods, whom they conceived to be the authors or distributers of things good and comfortable, they adored or honoured with propitiatory sacrifices. Both kinds of sacrifices or services one and the same Romish priest may wrest from the people committed to his charge: the one, to wit, placatory sacrifices, he may exact, and the people will be ready to perform, lest he withdraw or alienate his intention from them or their children, whilst he administers the sacrament unto them: for his malicious or fraudulent withdrawing of his intention from the sacrament, may procure them greater loss or harm than the heathen could conceive their angry or wreakful gods could work them. The other kind of sacrifices, to wit, propitiatory, the people committed to his charge will be willing to exhibit to the Romish priest, that he may be the more diligent, circumspect, and attentive, whilst he administereth the sacraments, seeing upon supposal or presumption of his diligence or intention in this business, they hope for a greater blessing than the heathens expected from their good or favourable gods.

But to conclude this first point: if we put all these together: first, the intention of the prelate or the bishop, necessary, by their doctrine, for conferring

the order of the priesthood, and for the efficacy of the sacrament of confirmation; secondly, the necessity of the ordinary priest's intention in administering the sacrament of baptism, of the Lord's supper, and of extreme unction; we need not be afraid or ashamed to charge their doctrine, in making the intention of the priest or minister of the sacrament to be an essential part of the sacrament, with nursing a perpetual distrust or doubt, not only of salvation, or perseverance in grace, but with distrust or doubt, whether men have the ordinary means for attaining unto the first or second grace: for of these means they can be no more certain, no better assured, than they are of the priest's intention.

The second point. The remedy of the *contrarii* as bad as the disease.

6. The second point which I undertook to shew you was, how some in reformed churches, by seeking the cure of this malady (to wit, doubt or distrust of salvation) by the contrary, did conceive a doctrine which either nurseth a doubt or distrust, not of salvation only, but of means necessary unto it, as bad or worse than the former doubt of the Romish church, or else occasioneth a presumption in many, which is worse than both. The doctrine which they conceived to be the fittest medicine for curing the Romish malady, (to wit, distrust or doubt of salvation,) was, the certainty or assurance of salvation; that *fides* was *fiducia*; that faith did include a certainty of salvation, which if every man could assume, none should doubt or distrust of salvation[d]. Mistake me not, I pray, as if I did absolutely deny or condemn this doctrine, which I acknowledge to be wholesome and true in its time and place;

[d] About this point, see book 4. [vol. iii.] and book 10. chap. 51, 52, 53. [vol. ix. p. 550, &c.] and sermon on Jer. xxvi. and Signs of the Times. [vol. vi. p. 49. &c. and p. 110.]

I only mislike the misplacing, or misapplication of this truth. As he said, *Beneficia male collocata male facta arbitror;* "Good offices evil bestowed, partake
699 more of evil turns than of good deeds;" so may I say, that the misplacing of truth is ofttimes more dangerous than a gross error.

But how or wherein hath this doctrinal truth, concerning the certainty or full assurance of faith, been misplaced by some writers of reformed churches?

In this especially, that they have taught or maintained this πληροφορία, this full assurance, (or *certitudo fidei*, which is somewhat more than πληροφορία,) to be as essential to the nature of faith, of that faith which distinguisheth a Christian from an infidel, or a faithful man from a reprobate, as the intention of the priest is, by the doctrine of the Romish church, to the essence or efficacy of the sacrament. Such an essential property would they have this certainty of salvation to be of true faith, that whosoever doth truly believe must be certain of his salvation, and whosoever is not certain of his salvation is no true believer; and to this point or purpose that saying of the apostle, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, hath been alleged by many: *Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates*[e]?

The former extent of this certainty of salvation to all true believers did give the sorest blow to reformed religion that ever it received; a wound more grievous than all our adversaries could have given it, had not her friends and lovers given them this advantage[f].

Now this negative or exclusive interpretation of

[e] Upon this text, see book 7. chap. 18, 19. [vol. vii. p. 138, &c.]

[f] See book 10. [vol. ix. p. 552.] where this author says, three hundred Bellarmines, three hundred Valentias, could not do the protestant religion so much harm as Dr. Hessels did, taking advantage of this doctrine.

this place of St. Paul, as if all were reprobates or without hope, which one time or other (after means of salvation have been offered) cannot assure themselves of their present estate in grace or salvation, hath more deeply wounded the consciences of private men, than the consciousness of all their other misdeeds or practices. And the doctrine is for this reason the more to be misliked, for that it specially wounds such as are of an humble and dejected spirit, and most afraid to offend God, either by unbelief or by misdeeds.

7. Both parts of my conclusion, to wit, that this doctrine admitteth either doubt of salvation or presumption, will be made clear, or cast upon you, from the confluence of these two errors mentioned; the one, which makes the certainty of salvation an essential or reciprocal property of faith; the other, which ranks all, that have not this assurance or certainty, in the state or condition of reprobates; which is indeed but a branch of another usual error (of which I must request and admonish you to beware, in whomsoever you find it) of them, who divide all mankind without limitation into two ranks, into sheep or goats, into elect or reprobates[g]. Though this be in due time and place most true, yet it is a truth much misplaced, if we make this division of all men before the hour of death or day of judgment.

But you expect a clear explication of the manner how these two opinions nurse either a doubt of salvation or presumption, which is worse than doubt. Take it then thus: if it were a truth to be taught, or if it be taken as true, that whosoever doth not attain unto the certainty of salvation is none of the elect; or that of all mankind, the one sort is irreversibly ordained to

[g] Of this division, see book 10. [vol. ix.]

life, the other irreversibly ordained to death. Then all such, as have heard the word preached, and received the sacraments, and are not as yet assured that they are in the estate of grace, or number of the elect, must of necessity doubt whether there be any possibility left for them to attain unto such an estate; or whether they be not in the number of reprobates. I know the usual reply to this objection is, that albeit some men be irreversibly appointed to death eternal, before
700 they be made partakers of life temporal, yet, because it is unknown unto us who they be that be thus ordained or appointed, therefore we must preach the word and administer the sacraments indifferently to all whom we see willing to hear the word or receive the sacraments.

But all this doth no way diminish the former doubt or distrust in most hearers; for if it still be true, (as the former doctrine supposeth,) that some men, the far greater part of men, which hear the word preached, are irreversibly ordained to death, every man, which as yet apprehends not his own estate in grace, or his ordination to life eternal, cannot be certain, must still doubt, whether he be or ever shall be in the number of them which are or shall be irreversibly ordained to life. The Romish church did never deny, but that the priest may actually or virtually intend to do what the church appoints him to do, when he administereth the sacraments. And yet, inasmuch as they teach withal, that if he do not intend to do as the church of Christ appoints him to do, the sacramental act is void, we hence justly charge their doctrine with breeding or nursing continual distrust or doubt of salvation. But if we withdraw or subtract the intention or purpose of God or of Christ from concurring with the word and sacrament which we exhibit unto all, or from con-

curring with any part, or the greater part of men, we do necessarily breed a greater scruple, or nurse a more dangerous doubt of salvation in all men, as yet not effectually called, than the Romish church doth. For God's intention or purpose to save men is without all question more essential to the efficacy of the word preached, or of the sacraments administered, than the Romish church can conceive the intention of her priests to be. Besides all this, if their doctrine were true, who teach that all such men as in the issue prove goats or reprobates, were such from their birth, or irreversibly destinated to death before they were born, God should withhold or withdraw his purpose or intention of salvation from far more hearers of the word and partakers of the sacraments than the Romish priests usually do.

8. But many (you will say) which hear the word are already assured of their estate in grace, or of their salvation; and this doctrine cannot occasion any doubt or distrust in them: it cannot indeed, whilst they are thus persuaded. But even this persuasion itself, if it be immature, or conceived before its time, doth secretly nurse a presumption, which is far worse than doubt or distrust of salvation; and sometimes occasions a worse kind of distrust or doubt than the former doctrine of the Romish church doth. For suppose a man, which is to-day strongly persuaded of his present estate in saving grace, and certain of his salvation, should to-morrow or the next day fall into some gross or grievous sin, and continue in it or the like for many days together, if his former assurance remain the same it was, it is no assurance of faith, no true confidence, but presumption; or if his former confidence or assurance upon consciousness of new sins fail or abate, the former division of all mankind into goats and sheep,

into elect and reprobates, will thrust him into despair. For the consciousness of freedom from grosser sins, or of practice of good works, cannot be a surer token of his estate in grace or salvation, than the consciousness of foul and grievous sins is of rejection or reprobation, if it were true that every man is at all times either in the state or condition of an elect person or a reprobate. For the rule of life and faith is as plain and peremptory, that no adulterer, no murderer, no foul or grievous
701 offender, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, as it is, that all such as live a godly and a sober life shall enter into it.

And yet our own consciences can give a surer testimony that we have committed gross and grievous sins, than that they are cleansed from the guilt of former sins; seeing the heart of man is more deceitful or more deceivable in its persuasions or judgment of its good deeds or resolutions, than in its apprehension of grosser facts committed by us. And for this reason I cannot persuade myself that any man which hath any sense or feeling of true religion, or rightly understands himself in these or the like points, can in the consciousness of gross and fouler sins rest persuaded that he is in the same estate of grace wherein he was, or in the same way to life. Howbeit, even in the consciousness of foulest sins, he may and ought to have hope that he may be renewed by repentance. And yet to have such an hope were impossible, unless he were persuaded that there is a mean or middle estate or condition between the estate and condition of the elect and the reprobates.

9. But let us take a man that hath been long persuaded that he is and hath been in the irreversible state of salvation, and is not conscious to himself of any gross or palpable sin, or at least of continuance in

any such sins, since this persuasion did possess him: yet if he have embraced this opinion or persuasion before his soul were adorned with that golden chain of spiritual virtues which St. Peter requires, 2 Ep. ch. i. whether for making our election sure in itself, or for assuring it unto us; this immature or misplaced persuasion may fill his soul with the selfsame presumption which the absolute infallibity of the present Romish church doth breed or occasion in all such as believe it; and that is a presumption worse than heathenish. For though an heathen or infidel kill men uncondemned by law, live in incest, and fall down before stocks and stones, or other dumb creatures; yet such a man being called in question for killing men uncondemned by law, will not justify his action: if his incest be detected, he will be ashamed of it; or being challenged for worshipping stocks and stones, he will not allege any sacred authority for his warrant. But if you challenge a Romanist with some like practices, and tell him that he transgresseth the law of God in those particulars as grossly as the heathens do, his reply will be, 'Though our facts be outwardly the same, yet our practices are most dislike. Our practices cannot be against the law of God, seeing they are warranted by the authority of the church and pope, who is the faithful interpreter of God's laws, and cannot err in matters of faith or practice authorized by him.'

In the like case, if you shall oppose a man that makes himself thus certain of his salvation before his time, in this or the like manner, 'Sir, you are as covetous, as great an oppressor of the poor, as uncharitable, as malicious, as proud and envious, as are the heathen, or others whom you condemn for infidels and no good Christians;' and press him with such

evident particulars in every kind, as would amate or appal an ingenuous heathen, or other mere moral man that were conscious of the like; yet you shall find him as surely locked up in his sins, by this his immature persuasion of his own infallible estate in grace, as the Romanist is by his implicit belief, or the church's absolute infallibility. So long as this persuasion lasts, that he shall certainly enter into the kingdom of heaven, no messenger of God shall ever persuade him that he hath done or continues to do those things, which whosoever continues to do shall
702 never enter into the kingdom of heaven. Gross and palpable or open sins might haply shake or break this persuasion, how stiff soever it had been before, but so will not secret or lurking sins; it rather animates or quickens those secret sins of envy, ambition, pride, or malice. And of all other fruits of this preposterous persuasion, or misplaced truth, this is the worst—that it makes men mistake their malice towards men, (whose good parts or fame they envy,) to be zeal towards God or to his truth.

10. Unless Satan had put this fallacy upon some men in our times, it were impossible that they could sleep upon the consciousness of such uncivil behaviour as they use, or such unjust aspersion as they cast upon all others, without respect of persons, which dissent from them in opinions often disputed between members of the same church without dissension. And of all the points in divinity this day controverted in any church, or betwixt the members of any church, there is no one that doth naturally better brook diversity of opinions, or accurate sifting, without hazard of breaking the bond of Christian peace and charity, than the controversy about the certainty of salvation, or of perseverance in the state of grace. For Christian

charity would presume, that every man which hath his senses exercised in these or the like points is desirous to be as certain of his own salvation, or estate in grace, as with safety of conscience his own understanding or rule of reason will permit him, or can make him.

Such as know their own estate in grace, by experience or otherwise, stand bound in equity, in Christian charity, and in humanity, rather to pity than to exasperate their brethren's weakness, which have not the skill or like experience to conclude for themselves so well as they do; or which doubt whether the doctrine *in thesi* (in the general) be true or false. And yet we see, by woful experience, that the contentions about these points have been so bitter and so uncivil, that no papist or other adversary shall ever be able so say more against the certainty of salvation, or men's irreversible estate in grace, than many such as have written for it have said against themselves. For if by the grace which they hold impossible for men to fall from, they mean the spirit of wisdom or understanding in matters spiritual, or the spirit of meekness, of sobriety, and Christian charity, every man that hath any branch of the Spirit of grace implanted in him may conclude, without sin, that many which contend most earnestly for absolute perseverance in it, either never had this grace, or else are totally fallen from it.

11. The third point proposed, was, the golden mean which the church of England maintains as opposite to these contrary extremes, but most consonant to the evangelical truth. The third point.

First, Our church doth acknowledge that *fides* is *fiducia*[h], that the very nature of that faith which differenceth a believer from an infidel, or a Christian from a mere natural man, doth necessarily include

[h] How *fides* is *fiducia*, see book 10. chap. 52. [vol. ix. p. 555.]

a certainty or full assurance in it. It must be without wavering, without distrust or doubt.

The only question is about the right or orderly placing of this certainty of faith, or full assurance, or what be the points whereon it first must be pitched.

These (questionless) must be points fundamental; and such is that, that the Son of God did die for us, that he did fully pay the price of our redemption. This every man is firmly to believe, otherwise he builds without a foundation. This certainty of faith,
703 or full assurance, you shall find continually pressed upon all hearers in the Book of Homilies, and other acts of the church.

But how shall every private man be fully assured that Christ did die for him, and that he fully paid the price of his redemption?

Sure no man can have a right or full assurance of this particular, unless he first assuredly believe that the Son of God did die for all men, that he hath redeemed all mankind. He that firmly and constantly believes this proposition, in some respect universal, 'The Son of God did die for all men,' can never doubt or waver in faith, whether he died for him, or whether he hath paid the full price of his redemption. He which believes the general by an historical or moral faith, cannot choose but believe the particular by the same faith. He that believes the general by a spiritual and true Christian faith, must believe the particular by the same faith. If the first proposition, 'Christ died for all men,' be *de fide*, the second likewise, 'Christ died for me,' must be *de fide* too.

But how any man should have assurance of faith that Christ did die for him, or hath redeemed him,

unless he be first assured by certainty of faith that Christ did die for all men; this, I confess, is a point which I could never be assured of, nor be satisfied in, by any that plead for special faith.

12. Sure I am, that the church our mother doth teach us to begin our faith or assurance from the general—Christ died for all men, he hath redeemed all mankind; and this general she grounds upon that saying of our Saviour, John iii. 16, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* The application or use of this place you may find pithily pressed in the third part of the homily upon the Death and Passion of our Saviour. To whom, saith the author of the homily, did he give his Son? "To the whole world; that is to say, to Adam, and all that should come after him."

He was not given to Adam, nor to such as come after him, until Adam and all that came after him were lost, until mankind were become his enemies. And this is that which sets forth the wonderful love of God unto the world, that he would give his only Son, whom he loved, for all of us which were his enemies: *Scarcely for a righteous man will one die,* saith the apostle, Rom. v. 7, 8: *yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

13. But when we are taught to believe that Christ died as well for every one of us as he died for any, we are bound to believe, not only that he shed as much blood for every one of us as he did for St. Peter or St. Paul, but that he shed as much blood for every one of us as he did for all men; that he paid as great a price for my redemption as he paid for the redemp-

tion of all mankind. It was not the quantity of his blood shed, but the infinite value of each drop which he shed, that did pay the price of our redemption[h]. Had the whole stream of his blood been much greater than it was, if it had been of value less than infinite, it could not have paid the price of one man's redemption; and of price more than infinite, his blood, whatever quantity had been shed, could not be for all. So that he did as much for thee as he did for both thee and me, as much for either of us as he did for the whole world. His deservings of every one of us
704 are infinite. Were this apprehension or belief of the infinite and undivided love of God in Christ toward all and every man rightly planted in man's heart, it would bring forth the fruits of love; he which is thus persuaded of Christ's love towards him in particular would love Christ, and would keep his commandments, would trust in Christ, and in all temptations rely upon him.

14. To conclude all concerning the right ordering or placing of that certainty, or full assurance, which is contained in our belief of Christ's death and passion.

The first branch of it is, that God by giving his only Son for us did give us an inestimable pledge of his love to us in particular. This we must believe *certitudine fidei*, "by certainty of faith." Upon this foundation or assurance of faith our apostle builds another, Rom. v. 9, 10, *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* And again, chap. viii. 32, *He that spared not his own Son,*

[h] See chap. iv. fol. 339. [vol. x. p. 64.]

but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

These are the prime seeds of true Christian faith, and must be undoubtedly planted in every man's heart before he can be a fit hearer, much less a disputer in other points of divinity, as, of election, reprobation, &c. Whilst we labour to plough up your hearts for the fit receiving of this seed of faith, we must not balk that saying of St. John, 1 Ep. iii. 3, *Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* If your persuasions of your assured estate in grace grow up together with this purification of your hearts, then are they persuasions of faith, not presumptions.

CHAP. XL.

The fourth Sermon upon this text.

ROMANS II. 1.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest, &c.

The author, chap. 38, propounded three points. He handled the first in the 38th and 39th chapters; the second, *viz.* How papists and protestants judging the Jew, condemn themselves, he omitteth, having otherwhere spoken to that point, and particularly, vol. x. p. 71, &c. and p. 160 of this volume; he proceeds here to the third point, *viz.* How Jews, papists, protestants, evidently condemn themselves, whilst they judge the idolatry of the heathen.

1. The very worst that the Jew or Christian can object unto the heathen, as heathen, is the acknowledgment of many gods, or the adoring of stocks, of stones, or, as Daniel enstyles them, *gods of gold, of silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone.* Howbeit, even this

705 imagination of many gods (or the worshipping of many imaginary gods) was but a transfiguration or transformation of the true and only God into the similitude of those creatures or visible substances which they represented by the images which they worshipped. This was the very height of heathenish idolatry, as our apostle instructs us, Rom. i. 23; they *changed the glory of the uncorruptible God*, that is, of the only God, *into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.* Of what things soever the images were which they did worship, they changed the glory of God into the similitude of that thing whose image they worshipped; and by this means, as the apostle infers, ver. 25, they *changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.* So then the transformation of the divine nature into unfit similitudes is it which must give us the true scale or scantling for measuring the heinousness of that sin which we call *idolatry.* He that most grossly transforms, mispictures, or changes the nature of the true and only God, is the most gross idolater, be he by profession a Jew, a Turk, an heathen, or a Christian. And it was observed, and excellently prosecuted, by a great prelate, a most reverend and learned bishop in this land[1], that the worshipping of images and the worshipping of imaginations, so the imaginations and the images be alike monstrous or unfitting, come both to one pass.

Idolatry transforms the divine nature into unfit similitudes.

2. In the worshipping of images, the Romish church and the heathens do (at least for the outward act) too well agree. And in this respect the Jew and Mahometan are more averse from the ancient heathens

[1] The late right rev. bishop of Winchester, bishop Andrews, in his sermon on that theme.

than the best in the Romish church are. And if the sincerity of God's worship did consist in negatives—as, in not worshipping the images of any living thing—the Mahometan or Jew might have the precedency of reformed churches. So far are they from worshipping images, that they do not allow the making of pictures, though for historical use. A painter or picture-maker is as execrable a creature amongst them as a professed Jew, a Turk, or Saracen, or worshipper of idols, is amongst us. Yet are the Jews and Mahometans notorious idolaters in that other main branch, or rather essential root of idolatry, that is, in worshipping their own imaginations, or in observing the fables or traditions of their ancestors.

To omit then that branch of idolatry which consists in the worshipping of images, we must examine ourselves (I mean we Christians, whether papists or protestants) by our adherence to the root of idolatry, that is, the worshipping of imaginations, or the transformation of the divine nature into the similitude of our corrupt desires or affections[k]. This is that which gave life and being to the multiplicity of imaginary gods amongst the heathens; and the poison of this idolatry may be more malignant in others than it was or is in them, for want of vent or issue.

3. We of reformed churches rightly censure it as a branch of heathenish idolatry in the Romish church, in that they teach the people to make solemn supplication unto saints deceased, for their intercession or mediation with God or Christ. And under this censure fall all their prayers which they make in this or the like form, *Sancta Maria, Sancte Petre, &c. Ora pro nobis.* Into this branch of formal idolatry they could

[k] The worshipping of imaginations the root of idolatry. See the 5th book, [vol. iv.]

not possibly slide but through the other, which properly consists in the transformation or changing of the divine nature into the similitude of corruptible man's corrupt affections.

706 Now how deeply that very church is tainted with this idolatry, her own plea for practising the former branch, in praying unto saints, will give evidence against them. For the best warrant which her sons can pretend unto, to mispersuade the multitude or vulgar, is this, that God is a great King, the *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, and therefore good manners require that we do not prefer our petitions immediately unto him, but use the mediation or intercession of deceased saints, which are in greater favour with him than we wretched sinners are.

Now by this very imagination or conceit, they transform the glorious majesty of the invisible God and of his Christ into the similitude of mortal men, of men though greater in power and majesty than other men are, yet (for the most part) not so good as they themselves are great, not so inclinable to poor men's petitions, nor so compassionate of their miseries, as meaner men are. Or if by nature, breeding, or civil education, these great potentates of the world be more affable or compassionate than other men are, yet are they not able to give despatch to half the petitions that would be presented unto them, if every man might be admitted to be his own spokesman, or to have immediate access unto their presence. However, to compare God or his Christ in the audience of our prayers unto the best and wisest kings that ever lived on earth, or to make the manner of preferring petitions unto potentates as a pattern for preferring prayers and supplications unto the Almighty, is at the best but a branch of heathenism, a manifest transformation of the divine

nature into the similitude of mortal man. And the Romanist, both by this practice and this plea for it, doth evidently condemn himself in that wherein he judgeth the heathen.

4. But would to God the Romanist alone did in this particular condemn himself in those things wherein he judgeth others, or that it were a common error unto him, with the Mahometan and the Jew, who though they abhor images more than he doth, yet they commit abominable sacrilege, which is equivalent to idolatry, in transforming the nature of the true God into the similitude of their own imaginations. But besides all these, I am to give you notice of some in reformed churches (and private warning, as occasion shall serve, of some writers in this church where we live, but no way authorized by it) which commit the same error which they so much condemn in the Romanist.

Some writers, not papists, transform the divine nature.

The Romanist (as you heard before) transforms or changes the nature of the incorruptible God, and of Christ himself, into the similitude of earthly kings and monarchs, yet not of cruel and prodigious tyrants. But these writers whom I mean, (as the Romanists object and the Lutherans prove,) transform the majesty and glory of the immortal God into the similitude of cruel tyrants, yea of such base and sordid pedants, (as the meanest amongst you would disdain should have any authority over your children,) that is, such as delight more in punishing and correcting them, than to direct or amend them in learning or manners. For so some late writers have expressly taught that the Almighty Maker of all things doth as immediately, as primarily and directly, ordain some men to damnation, as he doth others unto life; that he delights as much in the exercise of punitive justice, as he doth in the exercise of goodness, mercy, love, and

bounty. That as by his determinate decree he created some to be elect vessels of honour, for the manifestation of his goodness; so by the same irresistible decree he ordains others to be vessels of dishonour, for the
707 manifestation of his justice. As if the manifestation of his justice punitive, or vengeance, (for that justice they mean,) were as necessary from eternity, as the manifestation of his mercy and goodness.

5. These and the like inconsiderate tenets, which I forbear further to prosecute or rehearse, did give, if not just occasion, yet colourable pretence and probability unto the Lutheran churches, for breaking off all league or amity with some other reformed churches, because, as they conceived, either they did not agree with them in the worship of the same God, or transformed God's nature into the similitude of his enemy, into hatred and cruelty itself. Now the best way to stop their mouths, or to make up that breach which the positions of some inconsiderate men have made, would be to disclaim their opinions, as the most learned in other reformed churches have solemnly done. For so that great light of the Heidelberg church[l], whilst it flourished, and he with it, (for both were in a manner extinguished together,) being challenged by two Jesuits that came to visit him, professing withal that they would use the Lutherans' weapons to make their challenge good, for making God the author of sin, did in the close or issue stand upon this defence, that however this (perchance) might be Calvin's error, yet it was not *error Calvinistarum*, no general error of the Calvinists, as the Jesuit objected[m]. For as for Paræus himself, albeit he could well brook to be accounted a Calvinist, that is, an adherer unto, or a maintainer of Calvin's doctrine in

[l] Paræus. [m] See book xi. [vol. x.]

other points, yet in this particular concerning reprobation he did rather accord with cardinal Bellarmine (and many others in the Romish church) than with Calvin himself. That he did not so well like of Calvin's opinion in this particular, or at least his manner of expressing his opinion, there is no man of learning or understanding that wishes well either to the memory of Calvin, or to the weal of reformed churches, but will commend Paræus's wisdom and ingenuity. But that this good author should like better of cardinal Bellarmine's opinion than of Calvin's in this point, I for my part commend his ingenuity more than his judgment. For if as good a scholar as Bellarmine was, would take the pains to examine his opinion as strictly as he hath done Calvin's, it would quickly appear to be for quality the very same, if not worse, however for the extent it may seem more tolerable.

Both of them were to blame in taking upon them to determine the particular manner how God doth reprobate; and it is a matter of no difficulty to refute them both; but a greater presumption to determine any third manner distinct from both. Only this in general is most certain, that seeing reprobation is an ordination unto death, no man is reprobated but for sin. But as it is not the carpenter or statuary, not he that works in stone, in wood, or brass, which makes an idol; for whilst the work is under their tools it is an image or statue only; he which sets it up or adores it, makes it an idol: so this opinion of reprobation, how harsh soever, yet whilst Calvin, Bradwardine, or perhaps St. Augustine, did handle it, it was an error only, or false imagination: they who now would make it a fundamental point of faith, or insert it in their catechisms, make it an heresy, or worse than an heresy, an idolatrous or blasphemous imagination.

6. But admit all of us were free from transformation of the divine nature, all of us orthodoxal in matter of opinion concerning the attributes of God or of Christ; yet all this would not free us from another branch of idolatry, as rife and luxuriant amongst other
708 Christians, whether of the Romish or of reformed churches, as it was amongst the heathens, or is at this day amongst the infidels: for we may rob God of his honour no less than the heathens or infidels do, without any idol or image, without misforming or mispicturing him in his attributes. And our apostle, at the 22nd verse of this chapter, hath made the robbing or despoiling God of his honour equivalent to that branch of idolatry which consists in the adoration of idols, *Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege*, or dost thou rob God of his honour? The word in the original extends to both, to all the branches of idolatry. Every one which adoreth idols takes that honour which is due to the only true God, and bestows it on that which is not God: yet in so disposing it they did offer it to a divine power, as they imagined it; they did not reserve it to themselves; though self-love, or indulgence to corrupt desire, was the original of this idolatry or alienation of God's worship: the idol was their partner.

Now if any who is called a Christian give the same indulgence to his own corrupt desires as the heathen did, he robs God of his honour no less than they.

Thus the Jews, who after their return from Babylon detained their tithes and offerings, were convinced by God's prophets, by God himself, who taught his prophets thus to convince them of as gross idolatry as any heathens had committed. For the heathens made a conscience of spoiling their gods, so did not Israel. That which their idolatrous forefathers took from the

true God, they offered unto the queen of heaven, unto other imaginary gods and goddesses: the later Jews spare this cost, and appropriate all unto themselves.

Now that idolatry which a man commits with himself, or the alienation of that which is due to God unto his own corrupt desires, is of all others the worst, for it is always mixed with pride or irreligion, which is worse than superstition.

7. To make the proof of this assertion a little more clear.

First, that the sacrifices or solemn services which the heathens performed unto their several gods, were but as so many luxuriant branches or excrescences of their own corrupt desires, or of secret references to themselves, we gather hence—that every nation or province did principally affect the service of that god or goddess which in the common esteem of those ignorant times was best able to satisfy their longing desires, or to give a temporal blessing to their labours.

Though there were many which were called gods, and goddesses many; yet unto the inhabitants of the isle of Sicily there was in a manner but one goddess, that was Ceres, the supposed patroness of corn.

What was the reason?

The revenues of that island or province did most consist in the fruitful increase of corn, and hence were that people more desirous to please, more afraid to offend this imaginary goddess, than any other divine powers: she in a manner had the monopoly of their devotions.

The same devotion and serviceable respects which the Sicilians professed to Ceres, the Bœotians (a people of Greece) performed to Bacchus, the supposed patron or protector of vines. Of Ceres they made as small account as the Sicilians did of Bacchus.

What was the reason?

The chief commodity which their country naturally
709 afforded was wine; a good harvest did not much advance their fortunes, nor a bad one much impair them. Their expectation was a seasonable and fruitful vintage.

The Athenians esteemed little of either of these gods, but held Minerva in more esteem than the Sicilians did Ceres, or the Bœotians did Bacchus.

What was the reason?

Minerva was reputed the goddess of wisdom, the nurse and foundress of those arts and sciences wherein the Athenians (their territories being for corn and wine but barren) did most delight[n]; and so they might excel others in wit, in learning, and politic wisdom, they cared not much for land commodities.

The ancient Gauls (a people which inhabited that country which we now call France, with the Netherlands, and those parts of Germany which are on this side the Rhine) were as peculiarly devoted unto Mercury as the Sicilians were to Ceres, the Bœotians unto Bacchus, or the Athenians unto Minerva or Pallas.

What was the reason?

They were greedy of that gain which ariseth from the exercise of traffick or merchandise, and Mercury, in the foolish divinity of those ignorant times, was a god of cunning or of wit in bargaining; a god, that being well pleased, could teach them how to overreach others, rather than to be overreached by them.

The inhabitants of Cyprus being by natural disposition and long custom inclined unto wantonness, made choice of Venus for their patroness.

Other cities and provinces, whose livelihood and maintenance did consist (as the Netherlands now do)

[n] See book the fifth, [vol. iv.]

in traffick by sea, had Neptune in greatest reverence and admiration.

8. All these instances do clearly testify, that the worshipping of every idol, or of the imaginary power which is represented, was but an excrescence or shoot of some internal immoderate desire. Now as the schools say, *Ubi unum propter aliud, ibi unum tantum;* he that desires physic for health's sake only, desires his health rather than the physic; so it is again true, he that sacrificed to Ceres for a plentiful harvest, to Bacchus for a fruitful vintage, or to Minerva or Mercury for wit, did indeed respectively sacrifice to his own desire of gain, or of cunning wit, or to some one or other corrupt desire or imagination.

Covetousness (as our apostle tells us, Col. iii. 5,) *is idolatry.* And our Saviour calls it *the service of Mammon*, the imaginary god of riches. Whence it will by good logic follow, that he which is most covetous is the greatest idolater in this kind, that is, the greatest server of Mammon, albeit he do not serve him in or by an idol or image: for the idol is but an accessory to this foul sin, the principal is the internal corrupt imagination or desire. He that can cheat without a broker is never a whit the honester man than he which useth his help, but rather (as the proverb is) a more crafty knave; or as he is a more cunning thief which can steal without an outputter or receiver, than he which always is enforced to use the help of one or other; so he that robs God of his honour, (whether by positive sacrilege, or by detention of that from him which is his due,) though this he do without an image or an idol to be his partner, is as great an idolater as the heathens were; for he sacrificeth that unto his own imaginations or desires, which the heathens did unto their imaginary powers.

To come to particulars.

9. If merchants or tradesmen be as greedily set
710 upon their gain as the heathen Gauls were, which offered sacrifice unto Mercury, they are no less grievous idolaters than they were: if this corrupt affection be as immoderate in Christians as it was in heathens, it will be of like force to withdraw their hearts, as it was to withdraw the hearts of the heathen from the only true God; of like force to sway them to as grievous transgression of the first and chief commandment, as the heathens could commit any against it. For impossible it is they should love God with all their heart, with any greater part of their heart than the heathens did, if their hearts be as strongly set upon riches and worldly commodities as the heathens were. And so much of our love and heart as is withdrawn and alienated from God, is a detention or robbing him of his honour; it skills not much on whom it be bestowed, so it be utterly alienated from him; the god of this world will place it where he list. But if the inordinate desire of gain do missway men by profession Christians to use deceit in bargaining, to overreach their neighbours, or to work their own advantage out of their brethren's miseries or necessities, they transgress the second great commandment as grievously as the heathen did, the sum whereof you know is, to love our neighbours as ourselves, to do to all as we desire to be done unto. And by the manner and measure of transgressing these two great commandments, (on which the whole law and prophets hang,) the true measure, as of idolatry, so of all other sins, must be taken.

10. If we should take an unpartial survey of all the several sorts or conditions of men throughout this land, and of their demeanours in their several callings,

what root or branch of goodness is there wherein we can be imagined to overtop many heathen nations, unless it be in point of faith and opinion? But these, we know, without correspondence in practice of good life, will be so far from justifying us in respect of the heathens or infidels, that they will more deeply condemn us. Covetousness, deceit, and violences were not more rife amongst private heathens than they are with us. If opportunity serve, *homo homini fit lupus*, every one is as a snare or gin unto his neighbour. The remedy which God hath appointed for this enormity are public laws and courts of justice. And yet, if the grievances which private men suffer from one another were put in one scale, and the grievances which befall them from the corruptions of courts appointed to do them right (whether these be civil or ecclesiastic) were put in the contrary scale, it would be hard to determine whether sort of grievances would overpoise others. And if the remedy prove worse than the disease, what hope of health? As for drunkenness, riot, and other profaneness, these were not so rife in many heathen nations, as they are now in most Christian states, because for the most part more severely punished amongst them than they are with us; and yet I pray God that the sins of the pulpit and of the printing-house may be found much lighter than the sins of the playhouse or the tavern, &c., when the great Moderator of heaven and earth shall weigh them in the balance of his unerring justice. This is certain, that notorious delinquents almost in every other kind are ashamed to justify themselves when their facts come to light; their very consorts will not be their advocates when they are proved against them. Whereas many popular sermons and treatises, albeit full stuffed with characters of more than heathenish pride, hatred,

malice, sedition, and scurrility, pass for current amongst the factious consorts, as containing rare expressions of fervent zeal in God's cause, and of sincere love to true religion. And if the light of the body be dark, how great must the darkness of that body be!

711 11. In drunkenness, in gluttony, in wantonness, and other branches of licentiousness, some heathen nations in former ages haply have exceeded us; but in this public and far-spreading licentiousness of tongues and pens, in bitter invectives against their brethren, in audacious libelling against lawful superiors, no age, before the art of printing was invented, could, no state or nation, since the invention of that art, hath exceeded or may compare with those times wherein, and those people with whom we live.

But admit the faults or delinquencies of our time were but equal to the delinquencies of the heathen; yet, as that ancient and religious writer Salvianus well observes, though the vices of the heathens and the Christians were but equal, yet the same vices are more criminous and scandalous in Christians than they can be in the heathen. If the heathens were profane, were covetous, were dissolute, licentious or disobedient, what great matter is it? they never heard of a redemption from this vain conversation, to be purchased at so high a rate as with the precious blood of the only Son of God; they never were called solemnly to vow integrity of life and conversation, as a service due unto that Lord which had redeemed them. All this we have done, and yet have left our Master's will (which we vowed to do) altogether undone, yea, continue to do the will of his enemy with as great alacrity and fidelity as the infidels or heathens do.

Again, the heathens had no expectation of any gracious immortal reward for well-doing; they feared no

dreadful doom or sentence after death, for the errors or misdoings of this mortal life. But we, ever since we learned the Ten Commandments and our Creed, have been hedged in on the right hand and on the left; on the right hand with hopes of a most blessed everlasting life, on the left hand with fear of an endless and never-dying death; and yet have transgressed these bounds, have on both hands outrayed as licentiously as the heathens did.

Surely one special reason why after so long, so much good preaching, there is so little practice of good life, so much licentiousness in the ways of death, is, because we preachers do not maintain that double hedge which Christ hath set us for keeping us in order; that is, we do not press the fear of death, and hope of life everlasting, so forcibly and seasonably as we ought and might.

Now these meditations of everlasting life and everlasting death are the points whereunto these discussions upon this text have been premised. God grant you docile hearts, and me the spirit of grace and understanding, for rectifying your hopes and fears of your final reward in that last and dreadful day.

CHAP. XLI. 712

GENESIS XLII. 21.

And they said one to another, [We have sinned, or] We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us.

§. 1. THE unnatural conspiracy of these sons of Jacob against their harmless brother, (the original and pro-

gress whereof I shall be enforced to unrip,) is at large set down in the 37th chapter of this book. The means whereby it pleased God to work out this confession and acknowledgment of it are contained in this chapter, and in these words—*We have sinned.* The word *asham*, in the original, more usually signifieth the guilt of sin than the quality or act of sin itself; as contrarily, *chata* doth usually signify the act or quality, and seldomer the guilt of sin. The best interpreters render it in this place *certe rei sumus*, "truly we are guilty:" and if this clause were fully expressed, it were as much as, *O nos certe reos!* "Wo unto us, we are verily guilty!" Whether way we take it, much it skills not; acknowledging the fact, they confessed the guilt; nor would they at this time have confessed the fact, had they not been overtaken with the terrifying consciousness of the guilt. Again, where our translation reads, *We saw the anguish of his soul*, &c. *therefore is this trouble come upon us*, the word in the original is one and the same, *zarah;* here, in the former place, expressed by *anguish*, and in the latter by *distress*, or trouble; which difference, though in sense almost nothing, yet would it more fully intimate the means or cause of their confession, if the same word were used in both places. The means or cause of their confession consists in the likeness or identity of their distress with their brother's distress: they would not hear their brother, when he besought them in the *anguish of his soul*, and now, when they are in like anguish of soul, they cannot be heard. The reason why they denied their brother's petition was their overhasty jealousy lest he should undermine them; and this governor (as they only apprehend him) will not hear them, being suspicious they are spies. Of the persons uttering this confession (besides the fact

itself, whereof anon) I will only say here thus much; albeit the Spirit of God hath noted this unto us, and sundry other outrageous acts of theirs, yet out of these particulars to censure their life or persons in general for reprobates, or men altogether void of all fear of God, were odious.

§. 2. Thus much being granted, that which for our instruction (to my conceiving) ariseth naturally out of this heinous fact before committed, and now first acknowledged, may be comprehended in these two asser- 713
tions: first, that men (as these are) of better sort (seeing the best sort of men are often wedded to some affection or other) do sometime not only assent unto heinous sins, but give them peaceable entertainment for a long time; secondly, affliction (especially affliction of like kind to that wherein we have offended) is an especial and ordinary means of breaking this league and amity betwixt sin and our souls: it breaks it in all, though not with equal success: some it enforceth utterly to disclaim it; others to repine at it: all, in some degree, for the present, to dislike it. The former of these two assertions may warn us to set a diligent watch over our affections, lest they bring us acquainted with such dangerous guests; the latter may teach us duly to observe all cross events or afflictions befalling us, that by them we may come to the knowledge of such sins as have been before concealed, or to discern the heinousness of such sins as we have known before in part, but not as we should; or at the least, if no affliction visit us, to seek some more sovereign remedy, which may cure our souls with less malady.

§. 3. For the former of these two assertions, That men of better sort do sometimes give admittance and long entertainment unto heinous and grievous sins;

to seek proofs for it elsewhere, were but to prejudice the truth herein delivered. Had the Spirit of God concealed the parentage of these men, who would not have judged them by this fact to have been the wicked brood of cursed Cain, rather than the seed of righteous Abraham? For hearken, O ye sons of Jacob, is not this your unrighteousness as the unrighteousness of Cain? is not this your conspiracy against your brother, as his conspiracy against his brother Abel? How then can ye not tremble and quake for horror, lest your brother's blood send up a cry to Heaven for vengeance upon you also? You know how dear and tender this your brother is in the sight of his parents; the comfort of Jacob and stay of his old age, whose week and feeble body, now growing downwards to the grave, not able to support the soul that gives it life, but as it leans on and is tied to the soul of the child; yet will ye go about to take his soul away from him? So may ye indeed win titles of cruelty from Cain, and at one blow purchase the name of murderers both of father and brother. Could his simplicity give occasion to any lamentable or tragical event, yet what law so strict as to account him capable of any mischievous intent? what judge so severe, as to pronounce him liable to the sentence of death? And will ye, who are his flesh, offer thus to seek his blood, only for some speeches of his construed by yourselves? His young and tender years might plead pardon for any speech he could utter, though never so contumelious; or for any fact he could intend, though never so treasonable, against a foreign prince or ruler; and will ye, the sons of his father, (only his betters in that ye might be wiser,) wrest matters of death from surmises of wrong spoken or intended against you? the best ground of your suspicion being but the voluntary relation of his

dreams, which in wise men are oft but toys; and if in children they be oracles, yet had he the wit to interpret them as foreshewing his rising by your fall, you might well imagine he could be wary enough to keep his own counsel.

§. 4. Any of these, or many other circumstances, which easily might be here observed, would suffice to make the hardest heart (not interested in this cause) to melt with commiseration at the miserable estate of this harmless child, and enforce the mildest spirit on earth to swell with indignation and anger against these cruel murderers, and arm mercy herself to prosecute the intent with all possible severity. But seeing now such is his lot, as he is fallen into the hands of 714
the parties incensed against him—who will be witnesses, judges, and executioners—not all these, and many other circumstances which might here be added, (though never so artificially managed,) could enforce them to let hold go of this present opportunity. Their stubborn affections having got (as we say) the better end of the staff, what might in reason seem of most force to withdraw them, they can easily hale to them. Doth our father love him well? yea, too well, (God wot,) as all of us can witness, to our great disgrace; and, as the end will prove, to our greater disadvantage. If other choice were left, there is none of us but would be glad: but now of these two, choose which you like best; one we must; either we must bereave our father of one son amongst so many, or else suffer him to bereave us all of our only father. Are his years but young? yet old enough to carry tales; and he that by his prattling can now purchase audience for whatsoever he hears spoken, his riper years' invention will be able to win credence for whatsoever he shall speak, though the tenor of his song be but false descant upon

our silence. Are the grounds of our suspicion but dreams? yea, but that is in the head by night which was in the heart by day; he may have pride enough to conceive such thoughts as may cause aspiring dreams, although he have not the art to keep that in his head waking which came into it sleeping. His wit will be greater, and his pride cannot be less; for where pride hath got the start, it proves the property of it to hold footing, and other affections must follow it; and where pride sits judge, and wit the executioner, woe be to all such as will not be their vassals; just cause we have to dislike his beginning, and we know not what danger may be in his proceedings. One thing we may be sure of—we may prevent all this by his ending; for a dead man's dreams prognosticate no man's harms. Hath not his father sent him a desolate way, from Hebron to Shechem? and he hath wandered as dangerous a way from Shechem to Dothan: many grievous mischances in both these ways already might, and many in his return may yet befall him. Seeing then his father first, and secondly he hath exposed himself unto such evident danger, if we make that now to be which heretofore might well have been, and otherwise in all likelihood hereafter will be, we shall use him but a little worse than they have done that love him best, which will extenuate our fault, although hereafter it should haply be known, which yet we can easily conceal. Only be resolute, and whilst this good opportunity serves us, lay hands upon him; our father shall believe *some evil beast hath devoured him.* Yet why should ye cloak causeless murder with a needless lie? If ye have resolved to shed his innocent blood, ye may certify his father truly, albeit ambiguously—'A company of unruly beasts have devoured him.' But God,

who preserved a Lot righteous in Sodom, hath reserved purer thoughts in the heart of incestuous Reuben, at whose request (carrying a further intent of mercy than he dare make known to his merciless brethren) they can be content to run over his death with haste to his burial. And as Solomon says of the wicked, *they sleep not, except they have done mischief*, Prov. iv. 16; so these wicked men, more thirsting after their brother's death, than careful of the sustentation of their own life, first see him set in a pit, where they hope he may starve for hunger; and so, from banqueting their bloodthirsty minds, they go to refresh their hungry bodies, sitting down to eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence.

§. 5. Here our gracious God, who turns the wicked purposes of men to better effects than the thoughts of 715
man can aim at, crosseth the good intent of Reuben, and by presenting to their view a company of Ishmaelitish merchants, sets up Judah, as it were at last, to cope for favour with the hangman, so the Ishmaelites will pay for it; and their covetousness straining courtesy with their cruelty, brings it down a note lower. For their better gain, they will not stick for once of butchers to become drovers, to leave killing, and practise selling; where mark, I beseech you, the distorted rule of sinful man's affections. These (or part of them) are the men who not long since, for their inordinate affection towards their sister, did work that bloody and desperate revenge upon the men of Shechem, which to effect they could then pretend it was an abomination for them to give their sister in marriage unto the lords of the land wherein they sojourned, until they had received circumcision. Now, for the inordinate love they bear unto themselves, they first go about to murder their innocent brother, and

then (which is the height of their mercy) to make him (so lovely a plant of the royal seed of Abraham) a perpetual bondslave, to be bought and sold amongst the baser sort of uncircumcised aliens. Thus, beloved, you see the progress and height of this wicked fact, too horrible to have been once intended, too dreadful to have gone so long time debated, and not recalled. It is an easy matter for us, that are only spectators of this tragedy, to sit and censure these actors as wicked and cruel men; as the fact in truth is most wicked and most cruel, though the men, no doubt, absolutely more merciful than most in our days. We must consider, it is one thing, where mercy, presented with a fit object, hath free liberty to follow its own inclination; another thing, where it is forestalled and overmatched with unruly affections, (as at large I purposed to have discoursed.) Let us give thanks to God's gracious providence for preventing our wicked inclinations by wholesome laws of civil regiment, under which we were born, and the good statutes of religious societies wherein we have been brought up, and let us not tempt God by giving the reins unto any headstrong affection, of what kind soever it be.

§. 6. Of this present fact, it may be further demanded, whether his absence might bring them to penitency, although the woful condition of his presence could not move them to pity: some attempts there be, which are most pleasant while they are in the acting, but being done, they leave in the actors a bitter sting of contrary grief; as things far wrested from the point whereupon they are fixed, return with greater violence unto the part most opposite: *Peracto demum scelere magnitudo ejus intelligitur.* Thus hasty and outrageous anger, glutted with boisterous revenge, sometimes resolves itself presently into tears

of compassion and bitter bewailing. Alexander in a drunken fit slew his favourite Clytus; and when he became sober would have killed himself: *Intellecto facinore voluit mori; certe debuit*, says Seneca. For the same reason it is, that rashness travels commonly of repentance: generally, such desires as proceed from great passions, as the good they follow, so they themselves melt with vehemency of their motion. Desires bred from conceit or fancy usually over weary themselves by mistaking the game which they run at. But seldom is it seen that attempts proceeding upon long and settled resolutions, once seconded with perpetuity of success and quiet fruition of their hopes, will easily conceive any sorrow for the means whereby they have been effected, be they never so unjust or unlawful. He that hath once cast a liking upon living by the spoil, will make no conscience of sacrificing to his net, 716
so long as his portion thereby grows fat, and his meat is plenteous: witnesses hereof be the lewd opinions of the ancient heretics, the foolish dreams of Pagans, with some wandering conceits of otherwise religious ancients, which, all being condemned and banished out of the primitive church, have notwithstanding, like running fugitives, for the gain which they brought with them, been enfranchised, and highly advanced in the Romish church; whose devotion is but an excessive desire of honour or admiration of men; and so long as her gainful revenues by this means continue the same, it is not to be expected that she will cease to burn incense unto her yarn, or, Moablike, to sacrifice her own sons in the maintenance of her unjust rebellious quarrels, or justifying her usurped claim to other men's kingdoms. There is not the grossest error or most damnable practice that can enter into the heart of men, which shall

ever be recalled by that church, so long as hopes of gain by her wonted merchandise are not cut off. Yea, so far she is from recalling or disclaiming them, that she can gull her foolish sons and delude the world by glozing over the just deserts of foul impiety and hellish villainy with the glorious titles of martyrdom or saintship. Had the late mischievous plot, which had the help of later years' invention to erect itself far above the height of all villainy that any of the ancient poets could reach unto in feigned tragedies, taken effect, or had the plotters been once throughly installed in their greedy hopes, their holy but simple St. Francis for ever after should have been reputed by papish fraternities (birds of his own hatching) but a beggarly saint in respect of that noble friar who first invented gunpowder, or of them which had improved his invention to the overthrowing of states and kingdoms without shot or bullet. Fire and water had fought for the prerogative of his holiness, whether the one had deserved better of Christ's church for its supposed force in chasing away devils, or the other for its dexterity in blowing up heretics. But, God be praised, their net is broken, and we are delivered; and in the pit they digged for others, themselves are fallen, to be made such sacrifices as Baal's priests can make, to purge that air by just effusion of their blood, which they had long polluted with the blasphemy of their breath.

§. 7. Excepting these brainsick hopes and frantic desires, which false and counterfeit religion may hatch, worst of all others are inbred native desires. Where they have followed their bent, and gone far without controlment, they seldom take the foil, although they often fail of their purposes: much less will they retire, when they join with such a good as can afford a con-

stant tenure of benefit or delight, without long or wearisome interruptions. Unless desires shrink for lack of deep and sure foundation, the actual possession of any good, whilst it continues, will fasten men's minds to an higher point of liking their purchase, than the hope of the same could incline them unto: for the good being of a permanent nature, once thoroughly possessed, adds more strength and alacrity to our hopes or desires for its continuance, than they had in the seeking the first possession or existence of it. Seeing then native and inbred desires are of all others most firmly seated, (if they have matter to feed upon,) there can be small hope of their yielding. The only way to subdue them, is, to starve them by cutting off their provision. And of all inbred desires, most dangerous, both for the grievousness of the temptations whereunto they are obnoxious, as also for the continuance in the same, are such desires as proceed from a stubborn esteem of men's own worth, or a 717
stiff inclination of holding their own, and maintaining their reputation. Men in whom such passions have come to their full growth must be more beholding to other men's modesty, wisdom, or patience, than unto their own discretion or honesty, if they live (for any competent time) free from endangering their neighbours' lives, or deserving their own shameful deaths.

Such passions as have been noted (or such desires as breed the like passions) were the root of this present mischief. Hence grew that vehement indignation in the sons of Jacob against their brother, partly for revealing their evil doings or sayings, but especially that he being youngest should lead their aged father, by whom they were to be ruled; hence sprung their fretting jealousy, lest he in time to come should domineer as lord over them; now Joseph is gone, they may

use their liberty in speaking without suspicion of bewraying; now they hope to find old Jacob a more kind and loving father to tender their good, and every way to increase their fortunes, without fear of future subjection. If now they remember their absent brother, this remembrance brings them in mind of their former estate in his presence; and as the precedent want of things themselves makes the real possession of them sweeter, so the strong apprehension or imagination of their former want, much increaseth the conceit or esteem of the good which men reap by their present fruition. Thus cannot these sons of Jacob think of their absent brother, but the joy at his absence is augmented by remembering the evils of his presence; and the greater the benefit seems, the readier would they be to prevent all means which might make them forget it. Suppose then he were present, the forwarder would they be to attempt the like against him; and whilst such resolutions stand still unshaken, what hope of repentance? And how little they had been touched with the conscience of this heinous fact, the circumstances of their carriage, set down elsewhere in this chapter, may witness against them. For men galled with the conscience of any matter but fit for curious wits to coin a jest of, much more of such heinous crimes as bear the perfect stamp of infamy, cannot abide to touch their own sores, much less will they occasion others to search into them; whereas these men, at the 13th verse of this chapter, peradventure being asked (as may probably out of other places be conjectured) whether they had e'er a father, they add in their answer the death of their brother, which they had sold, passing it over with as little care and reckoning as they had cause to mention it; *We thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man*

in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not. And that he is not, is your perpetual shame; yet can you so slightly run over your father's grief, your brother's disaster, and your own disgrace!

§. 8. Hitherto, beloved, the estate they had purchased by their brother's fall stood firm and entire; and in presumption thereof have they stood at defiance or neglect of their duty towards their Lord God; now the date of their prosperity is expired, and the tenor of their fortunes changed, they begin to relent. Now thirteen years passed since this mischief was conceived; in which space the longsuffering of God waited for their repentance, time long enough (a man would think) to have been smothered in the breasts that bred it, unless they had been by sorrow and repentance delivered of it. True it is, continual prosperity (as in many others, so in these) for a long time lulls conscience asleep, whose sting can never die but by repentance; *We saw the anguish of his soul.* It may 718
here be demanded why they utter this confession, after all of them, except Simeon, were released, seeing their danger was greater when all were committed, and only one to be sent home for their brother. It may be answered, first, that after their releasement they were afraid of greater danger, as in Gen. xliii. 18; after their return they interpret their kind entertainment but a bait to entrap them, and to bring them in bondage; secondly, that it is not apparent (no not probable) that this confession was uttered by them after their releasement, albeit in place coming after their releasement, which hath more connexion with their imprisonment, and therefore (according to the method oft used in this sacred history) to be immediately placed after

their imprisonment, and these words of my text, being of another rank, to come after both.

The application of what hath been said of the first assertion.

§. 9. To review that which hath been spoken for our instruction. We see, beloved, by the example of these men, what grievous falls the best sort of men are prone unto. To these I might have added (if so either the doubtfulness of the assertion had required or the time permitted) the example of David and others, of excellent note for their piety and religion. That many men have been free from the acting of such heinous sins, the cause in many might be, for that which way soever they ran, their course was slow; if towards him, though but a snail's pace, the devil knew they might in time come to him: if towards heaven, he might be in hope to overtake them, without any great plotting to procure such great falls, or any vehement enticements to cause their outraging extraordinarily: yet dare I not deny, but sundry of excellent spirits have been free from such foul offences, at least, after their conversion. And many such, as have won admiration in the eyes of the world, for their sure footing and never fainting spirits in their first course towards heaven, had the Spirit of God been storyer of their lives, we should have had notice of their often trippings, their many dangerous slidings, and sundry grievous downfallings. What shall we say then, seeing men of such excellency in God's service have been overtaken with such heinous offences? shall the like in us, because men of lesser gifts, be accounted less dangerous? God forbid! Hath any man sinned in this high degree? let him not despair, he hath the same advocate these men had, even *Jesus Christ the*

righteous, whose righteousness the best of men, yea their best actions, stand in need of, and the worst actions of men most wicked may by him have help and succour in abundance. Is any man free from this height of sin? seeing now to his seeming *he stands, let him take heed lest he fall.* Our God and Governor, by the example of these men, hath given us sufficient warning how dangerous an adversary we are to deal withal, who thus hath foiled the valiants of Israel: and shall we, who are but grasshoppers to them, provoke him to wrestle with us? and provoke him we do, if we call not home our wandering and worldly affections; these are the handles without which the devil ordinarily lays hold on no man, and to give indulgence to them is to dare our adversary (the devil) to combat. Consider we then, I beseech you, how great is the necessity of that precept, taught us by our Saviour, (therefore most necessary because his precept,) *Watch and pray continually, lest ye enter into temptation.* Are we negligent herein? A slender search were it to examine ourselves only concerning this fact here mentioned. This were a matter of like folly, as if a physician should bestow his whole employment in curing that disease of which his last 719
patient died. Nay, whosoever is conscious to himself of supine negligence in this precept, his affections have made a fool of him, if he can persuade himself that he is free from danger of committing any sin. There is no affection which will not fetch over all the rest, if it be cunningly humoured, as the devil in his faculty wants no skill: nor is it any argument to say, 'I know my nature, and my thoughts are far enough averse from such outrages;' for new opportunities and temptations come never unfurnished of new motives and unknown persuasions: otherwise those caveats of the

temptations and subtle power of Satan, so often urged by the Holy Ghost, might be accounted hyperbolical speeches or allegorical bugbears. Though all be clear to-day, yet, unless we continue our evening and morning search, and sometimes set a midnight watch over our souls, the train may be laid when we least think, which may take hell-fire ere we be aware. Let every man therefore examine his own conscience, whether or no he hath continually stood upon his guard, using the weapons of his spiritual warfare, whereby the fiery darts of Satan may be quenched.

§. 10. Not to prejudice the secrets of any man's conscience, give me leave only in a generality to level at most of our diligence herein, by looking through the usual carriage of the more civil sort of men in our days. What argument of more force to persuade such men they serve God well enough, than that deceitful sorites—'To live well is the end of our life;' and he lives well that means no man harm; and to be honestly merry is to mean no man harm; thus, *a primo ad ultimum*, from the one end of the year to the other, nay, would to God it were not true of too many, not true of the most, that from the beginning of their lives to their ending, the greatest part of vacancy from necessary business, which all should be bestowed in good doings, were not spent in good meanings, and their good meaning no better than meaning no harm. Beloved, albeit we may persuade ourselves we think charitably of others, (peradventure by thinking too charitably of ourselves,) yet have we no reason in the world to be persuaded the devil is so minded towards us; he never means us any good; and while we spend too much time only in meaning others no harm, he gains opportunities of doing us many a mischief. The heart of man, immediately after our parents' fall,

(returning to the temper of the earth, whereof it first was framed,) is but a stepmother to flowers and wholesome fruits, too fertile and kind a mother to unprofitable and hurtful weeds; let us never think ourselves good husbands, if witting and willingly we sow no evil seed there where poisonous weeds will grow of themselves too fast without sowing; our continual care and diligence must be added in sowing and cherishing good seed being sown, by preventing the growth of the bad, which the envious man will be watchful enough to sow whilst we least mean any harm, even whilst we are asleep: nor is it all our care and diligence for our safeties that can make up the tenth part of his watchfulness for our destruction, whose strength and skill are able to effect more upon least advantages to our woe, than all our strength and skill, though armed with our double diligence, could work out for our weal. What then is our hope, or what is our strength? must not our hope be in *the keeper of Israel, which neither slumbereth nor sleepeth?* must not the *almighty God of Jacob be our strength?* without the hope of whose power, both night and day to protect us, our best endeavours are to death; we have no strength but to destruction; whose power to hope for in idle wishes, without our 720
earnest endeavours at set times of serious invocation, were but to provoke the same against us. The greatest strength we may trust unto must arise from the perpetual experience of our weakness; the only courage we can resolve upon must be our often running unto and invoking his aid, who only is stronger than our adversary.

§. 11. Besides this danger, in respect of present and future times, we see by the example of these sons of Jacob, in whom this sin had lurked so long, in what

dangerous estate we are yet in regard of sins past; for who can say, *My heart is clean?* or who can say, The days of my youth have been such as need not the curious search of riper years? Let this be the pride of Pharisees, and shame of hypocrites; none here present, I presume, hath kept so slender a register of his life, but can remember betwixt God and his conscience many grievous sins. Unto this remembrance add we farther this consideration, that not every acknowledging, not every confession, or sorrowing for sins committed, will take away the guilt of the same sins; many confess and sorrow, and yet want that Christian resolution to proceed unto the banishment and utter extirpation of them: politician like, either for the quieter state of mind, or lest the eager pursuit of those matters should hinder their set purposes in other proceedings, they can be content to yield unto some toleration of their relics in their heart, whose entire force is a terror to their conscience. The best issue whereof will be this, that either when great opportunities are offered they will make head against us, bursting out into more outrageous facts than before, or else when we shall come to new conflict with other sins, the devil will muster their broken forces to our imagination, to drive us headlong into despair. Consider then, I beseech you, how necessary is that examination of the apostle, 1 Cor. xi, in respect of former sins; and yet, besides these known sins, we must know that we have been led hoodwinked by our affections into many dangerous sins, which then we knew not to be such, nor yet can take notice of in particular. Yea, but will God require the examination for them also? Beloved, we cannot be ignorant how the ancient Christians were penitent and sorrowful for those sins they had commited, being heathens,

whereof they had no warning to beware, nor like means to eschew them, whereas we have had that warning of our Saviour from our cradles. It was taught us amongst the first lessons we learned of our fathers, and told us in the first instructions given us by our mothers, besides the continual reiteration of it by God's ministers, his preachers: and therefore, as the neglect of this precept hath been from time to time wilful and desperate without all excuse, so all such sins as proceeded from this neglect, though for that time unawares, and yet unknown, have been nevertheless without all excuse wilfully and desperately committed; nay, such sins as upon presupposal of this neglect were altogether impossible to have been discerned, our consciences will one day shew us to our grief, were very possible, yea very easy, to have been avoided, had we not thus riotously and haughtily despised the heavenly advice of the Wonderful Counsellor. We deceive ourselves, if we look either to know, much less to resist or avoid sins, otherwise than by virtue of prayer.

§. 12. Yea but affliction shall teach us both. It is true indeed, such is the foolishness of man's heart, that usually he learns not this lesson of any other besides his old schoolmaster, his bitter experience; but it is more than probable, that such, as after so 721
many warnings will affect the deferring of reformation until affliction overtake them, will hardly be reformed by her correction. And God hath made us no promise, either when or in what measure he means to afflict us; the time may be such, the affliction may be so great, as our best strength will be unable to support; we unwilling to hear what it might teach in present, much less apt or ready to receive instructions for our former misdoings: let us

not then defer the time of our amendment until the days of our afflictions, lest our wilful delaying of our repentance proves the just hastening of God's more fierce and unsupportable vengeance. That usual proverb, *Dies minuit dolorem*, saith Tully in his Tusculans, is true as well of the time going before the grief received, as of the time coming after; the reason of which opinion hath good ground in philosophy: for the wise and sober precogitation of ensuing evils may temper a man's mind to receive the evil, when it comes, with that calm and mild disposition, which others less provident never attain unto, till, after long pain and vexation, the conceit of former grief by new impressions and cogitations be quite worn out or much abated. Far more certain it is in divinity, that the sober and devout meditations of those evils which may befall us in affliction, may work in us the same affections which affliction itself, taken after the best receipt, would in us after the danger were past; for affliction itself works those zealous affections of acknowledging and sorrowing for sins, mentioned by St. Paul, 2 Cor. vii. 11, for no other reason than this, because it brings with it such devout and sober meditations. Doubtless, would we thus judge ourselves, we should not be judged. Are we come to this heavenly banquet with that preparation the apostle requires, and every one of us will make personal profession of? God forbid, I, or any of us, should herein judge another: let every man judge himself. Be it so then: and, by the rule of these our wiser cogitations, examine we our ownselves what have been our usual delights in some shorter part of our life lately spent, likeliest to be in freshest memory; and let every man's conscience tell him, whether or no he find not his soul charged with a great deal of stuff which was sweet

enough in the swallowing, yet is now such as goes much against this better tempered stomach, whose taste is faith joined with sobriety, whose appetite is earnest desire of amendment of life. Here then, by this our present temper and perfect constitution, let us take the true measure of our forepast distempered diet, fixing a sure mark upon, and when our better leisure will permit, let us enter into serious account, how many ugly loathsome dishes the devil hath cunningly dressed us in our days, putting such names upon them as he knew best fitting to our particular appetites. And after account taken, consider, I beseech you, what may be the end of our intemperancy, if either we continue therein, or take not some provident sober course to prevent the diseases which may arise from that which is past; if our best faculties go still a wandering after other objects, so that when bodily death or danger shall approach, our imagination come to prevent our understanding, and fancy fall first a working upon the conceit of former delusions, the best we can hope for will be the bitter pangs and deadly gripes of a loathsome vomit; God grant we never surfeit unto death!

§. 13. The second assertion followeth: affliction, and especially affliction of the like kind to that wherein we have offended, is an especial means of breaking the league or amity betwixt sin and our souls; in some degree in all, as well in the regenerate as in the unregenerate. First, of affliction in general. The 722
reason why it brings men to an acknowledgment of sin, is (as I take it) muchwhat the same, or very like unto that, whereby we come to know sundry affections of our body, yea and oftentimes the true temper of our minds, better in sleep than we can do waking; only this difference may be observed, that the apprehen-

sions are more lively in sleep, and the judgment reserved till we be awake; whereas in affliction, both the apprehension and judgment are at once bettered. There are the same exagitations of humours in our bodies and the like phantasms waking and sleeping, but our souls and senses being bent another way, and fixed upon external objects, these inward motions whilst we are waking make no impression. In like sort, our consciences (albeit in some men they may seem to be buried) are continually awaking, but our souls and affections being still in hot pursuit of foreign delights, (such as prosperity can present in abundant variety unto them,) take no notice of their complaints; which, of men's souls set upon outward pleasures, are no better accepted than a poor man's pennyless suit to a covetous lawyer or needy courtier, whilst he hears the harmony of angels soliciting him for the adverse party. Both of them perhaps, with that unrighteous judge in the gospel, would suffer his importunate cry to enter into their ears, were they not otherwise possessed with sweeter sounds, better consorting to their desires. That our consciences, whilst we continue in sinning, are still working, is hence apparent; for that such men as are most obdurate in their sins, and of all men most impenetrable by the sting of conscience, can least of all men endure to be solitary, or out of practical employment, lest their consciences (will they nill they) enforce them to take notice of a deep bill of debt due unto God for damage done unto their own souls: and therefore, to prevent this pity of their souls, which the outcry of their consciences would constrain them unto, they force new delights, and hunt after pleasures, as the Jews, when they sacrificed their children unto Moloch, had their loud music, lest the hearing of the outcries of their children should move their Jewish

hearts to commiseration. Marvel not then, if the riches of God's goodness leading us to repentance, oft cuts off all our hopes, and quite debars us of our outward delights, that our souls, retiring home to their natural station, may be acquainted with domestic matters, and look into their own estate and constitution. And when the soul is once thus retired, and kept fast from wandering or moving, the sting of conscience then torments her, which before could not touch her; even as men often receive a grievous wound, and never perceive it whilst they continue in earnest fight, and vehement agitation of body, but after their hot blood retires, and their spirits come to their natural residence, extremity of pain comes upon them.

§. 14. Knowledge and wisdom, saith the philosopher, proceed not from any mutation in the understanding, but from the staying or settling of the soul; and for this reason, saith he, "neither the soul's understanding, nor discernment of senses, is so exact in children as in men of mature age, because their wits are always in motion, and full of perturbations." And as the same philosopher elsewhere speaks of moral philosophy, so may it be said of all true knowledge: for the attaining such knowledge, it skills not whether we be young in years or in manners. If we be carried away with incontinent desires, the riper we be in years, the more babes are we in all true wisdom; our desires must be pacified, ere we come to parley with 723
reason; our fancies must be settled, ere we can give ear unto understanding. The nimblest wits, and of best conceit, either for the employments or entertainments of prosperity, are as uncapable of any true and heavenly wisdom, as frantic madmen are of civil instructions; for the motions of the one's imagination

are not so much more inordinate and distracted than the other's, as the other's object exceeds the object of civil prudence in difficulty of apprehension, seeing then the right and perfect apprehension and esteem of every object proceeds from the settledness of the soul and spirits. As the only way to bring frantic men into their right minds is whipping, scourging, and binding—for so the imagination, which hath her influence in every passion, being brought to keep residence in more places, may thereby be restrained from making garboils only in the brain—so pleaseth it the wisdom of God to use the like means in bringing men out of their bedlam fits of spiritual madness, into which the dearest of God's children often slide from the height of prosperity: if he punish them, it is out of his tender love for their good: by the same love doth he afflict them whereby he doth at other times exalt them. He never wounds but that he may make whole; as Elihu speaketh, Job xxxvi. 7—10: *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted. And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction; then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.* And because affliction is so effectual a means of turning the hearts of sinners unto God, he addeth, ver. 13, *But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.* And the Lord (Hosea vii. 14.) layeth this peculiar sin unto Ephraim's charge, *that they did not cry unto him with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds.* But to proceed; it was not affliction in general, but affliction of the same kind

with that which they had laid upon their brother, which brought forth this acknowledgment in the sons of Jacob.

§. 15. It is evident by the light of nature that the rudiments of nature's laws are written in all men's minds, and amongst others these two; first, of doing good; secondly, of not doing wrong to others; yet, partly through original corruption, the resemblance of them is every where so obscure, partly by our irregular affections they are in many so defaced, that in practice of life they serve for little better use than an old moth-eaten dusty map would benefit a man for his direction to travel through the country which it represents; besides that it represents not every part, those parts that are whole and clear do represent only *in plano;* whereas he that comes to make his journey through it finds many risings and fallings of ground, windings and turnings, with other diversity of prospects, which puts him quite besides his former aim in a little way travelling. In like sort, while we behold the general and speculative rules of nature's law, all things are *tanquam in plano et abstracto.* Ask of any man, (not quite degenerate into beastliness,) whether it be good to comfort the afflicted, to help the fatherless, or to relieve the needy; and he will answer you, out of the 724
draught of nature's law he carries in his head, 'Doubtless very good, and consonant unto nature.' Thus far he can go with as great facility as a geographer out of his map can tell you how far it is from Paris to Rome, though he never mean to travel it. But when we descend unto the particular actions themselves, and be thus solicited; 'Lo! here is an afflicted soul, you might do well to comfort him;' 'Lo! there is a needy body, you might do well to relieve him;' then, through the inter-

position of our affections, many difficulties are descried which before appeared not. Either the party on whom mercy is to be shewed offends us, or else we have other employments, with many like impediments, through which our exemplary rules cannot conduct. The reason why we neglect to do others good, is, because their good includes a depriving of ourselves of some good, the loss of which is sensible. Notwithstanding, when it shall please God to cast us into their mould, be it sickness, poverty, or other distress, then the superficial draught of nature's law which we carried in our heads is deeply imprinted in our hearts. Then we know distinctly, by an inward feeling, and, as it were, by a quick and solid touch, how good a thing it is to be comforted in affliction; how good a thing to be relieved in want, or redeemed from danger or distress; and the same touch or feeling doth give us the true esteem of the good we have neglected, when we suffered the afflicted to go comfortless, and the needy without relief. The conceit or knowledge of the former rules now answers unto the real things themselves; not as the draught or portraiture unto the solid which it represents, but as the print in the wax unto the seal that made it. And therefore, if we suffer not this impression through negligence to decay, or fill it not up with ravenous desires, when we shall see others afflicted in like case, their affliction will find the way open into our hearts, and so renew in us the former touch or feeling of our own miseries past, that sympathizing with them in a fellow-feeling, their grief becomes our grief; to comfort them is our comfort, especially if they be of like condition with us. Hence was that of Dido to Æneas: *Haud ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco:* being as it were one syllable

of that precept, *Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do unto them*, which, as our Saviour tells us, is *the tenor of the law and the prophets*.

§. 16. The ordinary discipline, which it pleases God to use in teaching the dull heart of man this lesson, is the rod of affliction. For the same reason doth he use the same means in teaching the negative precept that answereth to this former affirmative: *Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris;* "That which thou wouldest not have done to thyself, do not thou to any other:" which in general is somewhat more legible in the rudiments of nature, (for the heathen oft mention this in their writings, but seldom (or never) the former,) albeit, for the performance of particular actions comprehended under this general precept, the natural man finds in himself every way as little ability as for the 725
former. For private good being the mark which most men aim at, the doing of others good can be no greater hinderance, than the doing of others harm may be a furtherance to the attaining thereof; and whilst men's minds are intentively bent upon their own private good, they have a live or feeling conceit of it, but either none or a mere speculative or intentional conceit of another's harm. Scarce any man thus bent, if you ask him whether he could be content to be used himself as he goes about to use others, but would answer you, 'Yes; (as for that time he verily thinks he could be very well content;) let every man, a-God's-name, use his best opportunity for his own good;' which sayings, though answerable to his inward meaning, are notwithstanding hypocritical, seeing his very inward persuasion and meaning, proceeding from corrupt affection, is by the scripture phrase mere hypocrisy; and his judgment in this as corrupt, as if the magistrate should adjudge a matter in controversy to the

one party, without once hearing the other's plea; and both as deceitful, as if a colloguing merchant should weigh out ware without just weight in the one scale; for the speculative conceit of good and evil is as the even scales; and the feeling, conceit, or touch of the one without the other, is as the scale with weight in it to an empty scale.

Now though we cannot be touched with a feeling of the harms we do to others whiles we are eagerly set upon our own good, yet these outward actions (which is the cover or container of the evil done) will stick in our minds. Whence it comes to pass, that when we shall have our own cup filled with a potion of the self-same kind, and we must pledge them two pints for a quart, then we can take the true and perfect measure of the evil we have done by the evil which we suffer; and finding in both a just equality, (unless our affections have quite obliterated the speculative rule of reason and nature,) we cannot but acknowledge divine justice. Whilst that wicked tyrant of Bezech (Judges i. 7.) was boisterously bent whether to work a beastly revenge for wrongs before received, or to take a cruel course for preventing further danger by taking arms, the depriving of many princes of their thumbs and great toes was no more to him than the throat-cutting or leg-breaking of so many fowl or pullets to one of his cooks; the outward action of both being one, cutting of flesh, shedding of blood, and breaking of bones; but when his course is come, that he must have his own toes and thumbs pared after the same fashion, then he knows distinctly how great pain for the present, and what irrecoverable loss is contained in so short and momentany an action; which being the common measure unto the evil he had done, and to the evil he suffers, he comes unto some knowledge of that

rule which our Saviour gives, Matt. vii. 2; *With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again;* and so yields up that laudable acknowledgment of God's justice, Judges i. 7: *Seventy kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me.* Laudable I term this acknowledgment, not for any probabilities or signs of true repentance in him, for he might acknowledge God's justice in punishing him no worse than he deserved, being yet persuaded, that having thus repaid the revenge he had taken by suffering the like, he had discharged all, and made God an acquittance, never dreaming of any further debt by his justice to be expected; laudable, nevertheless, I may call it, (and would to God of all Christians herein imitated!) in that, for aught he knew, the children of Israel had no just cause of war against him, yet thus used, being taken in war by them, he murmurs not against them, but ascribes the whole event to God's justice. 726

§. 17. Out of this known manner of God's punishing did that traitorous Ahithophel rightly infer, (had he assumed aright,) that God would there plague the protestants where they had unjustly (in his opinion) suppressed the Romish religion. His error, I say, was in the assumption, arrogating to himself (like his master, the man of sin) God's vicegerency on earth, presuming, that wheresoever he had set his dislike, thither would the Almighty send his curse; and that the eternal decree of God's immutable justice should condescend to the approving of the furious projects of his fiery passions. But the Lord of mercy and truth hath proved the consequence by inverting the conclusion upon him and his complices, they having first given a true antecedent to infer it. His wisdom and justice

hath made that which they consecrated as the instrument of their advancement by our downfall, to work their shameful overthrow to our comfort; his right hand hath brought to pass, that to the public spectacle of this whole land the ravens of the valleys should pick out the eyes of Ahithophel and his associates over the place under which they had digged a pit for the destruction of God's church, of his anointed, and this whole realm.

§. 18. But to return to those sons of Jacob. Whilst bitter revenge and indignation had infected their souls, they had quite lost all taste of pity and compassion; the best conceit they could have of another's misery was such as a rich crammed glutton hath of hunger and penury; their brother might cry and lament, and their ears therewith be in like sort affected as at the chattering of pies, or screeching of owls; his distressed soul might imprint her anguish in the woful gestures and motions of his body, and all this make as much impression in their cruel hearts as the tricks of an ape or fawning of a dog; but afterwards, the heat of their disease (whose original was fulness and plenty) being by the long famine throughout the land of Canaan allayed, and finding this old and miserable entertainment in a strange land, where they looked for a feast, the cogitation of this unexpected change strikes them with a sudden fear, and being cast down from their hopes of evasion by earnest entreaty and protestations of their innocency, fear makes entrance for sorrow and grief, and all wanting means of support-ance sinking by little and little to the centre of their hearts, they come to sound the depth of their brother's misery: their close imprisonment shews them what it was to have cast their brother into a desolate pit; their woful experience of this governor's implacable

mind in their perplexity, gives them to know what deep impression the heavy designs of their impenetrable hearts had wrought in the tender heart of their afflicted brother. Finally, their miseries so proportionable in quality, (the odds in quantity, which was great and manifold, was altogether on their brother's side against them,) what hitherto they have suffered, for the nature of the punishment, they cannot but acknowledge easily inflicted; and justly do they fear, lest their present misery be farther extended, until it answer in every point unto the just quantity of the mishaps which have since befallen their brother. The misery which they had procured him was (they fear) seconded either with ending of his life, or beginning of his slavery; and they apprehend this their present perplexity as the forerunner of bondage or messenger of death. Bondage they feared long after this, as appears out of the chapters following; and Reuben, in the verse next to my text, entertains his grief as part of God's justice, making inquisition for blood. That 727
which I would thence commend to our imitation, when like troubles shall befall us, is, their speedy humiliation under the powerful hand of God: they grudge not, no not in their private conferences against this governor, who, for aught they knew, without all cause of suspicion, lay in wait to entangle their innocency; they ascribe all unto God, who had found out their wickedness. A live pattern of this humiliation we have in Judah, who was the author unto the rest of selling their brother whilst his unruly affections of anger and jealousy had overswayed his thoughts; and that opportunity of the Ishmaelites coming towards them falling in the same scale, both the conceit of his brother's misery and his aged father's grief are of no weight to recall his purpose. Now these affections are

shaken off, and his mind come again to her natural station, the very conceit of his father's grief doth so oversway all self-love, that he offers himself to be a bondslave, rather than he should see the evil which would come upon his father by the detaining of Benjamin in Egypt; counting this as the utmost inconvenience that could befall him, as it is in the two last verses of the forty-fourth chapter.

§. 19. It is true, beloved, that affliction naturally breedeth a dislike of sin, and that our God doth look we should in heart call upon him in the day of trouble, because he punisheth for our good: then surely, wheresoever affliction hath been, and this effect hath not followed, it is an evident token of a bad disposition. Amongst the many flourishing days wherewith the Lord in goodness hath blessed this land, unto the admiration of other countries, hath he not sometimes proposed unto us objects of public calamity, to call us unto this sorrow of heart, and unfeigned repentance? to omit the days of famine, which he hath intermixed with our many years of plenty. Were there not times of late wherein scarce any place of note in this land but was smitten with the noisome pestilence? When destruction walked by our doors, and death had entered in at our gates, did we then seek the Lord with our whole hearts? did we then shew as great signs of love towards God, who only giveth life, as we did fear of second causes, which only by his appointment might procure our death? were our incontinent desires at that time as much abridged, as the society of the suspected was avoided? were we as earnest to curb our former ambitious thoughts, or diminish our unnecessary pleasures, as we were, that the infectious should be restrained of former liberty? were either priest or people as circumspect in their carriage lest they should

farther offend their God, (in pulling down whose plagues and vengeance upon us they had been sharers by their former grievous offences,) as they wished others should be wary of endangering them? If many such were seen then in this city, the most, I fear, were such, as were then as desperately negligent of the former, as they were earnestly desirous of the latter; for were not the most of us become as wanton children, so long nursed in the bosom of pleasure, till we had learned more wit than to be weaned from her breasts, though God had then beset them with wormwood, and mingled her sweetest delights with the bitterness of the cup of his wrath? Look we back into the constitution of this whole city at that time, was it any better than such a body, the most of whose members had been over-gone with a dead palsy, wherein continual rubbing and cunning handling might extort some motions arguing life, which ceased just then when the physician left working? Now these days are gone, may we presume the danger of our disease is past? Surely had we then sorrowed as we should, our joy might now have been far greater, at least far more 728
secure, because more sincere. But the signs of our bad temper then yield fearful prognostications of greater dangers to ensue; if not of like bodily plagues, yet of a worse spiritual disease, unless we accustom ourselves to a better diet. Just cause we have to be sorry still, if for no other cause, yet for this, that we so lightly sorrowed then; and howsoever, whilst our heads are crowned with delights, and these days of health and peace frequent our dwellings, we can afford none, or a scornful entertainment to such cogitations; yet doubtless, when calamity shall come upon our heads, and afflictions take up their lodging in these our tabernacles, besides the number of all our

other sins, and that wearisome retinue wherewith affliction shall come attended, the conceit of this very sin will then intrude itself as a troublesome guest, to charge our souls, that the Lord hath so visited this land, and we so lightly have regarded it.

§. 20. But to come nearer the case and curing of these men here mentioned in this their affliction; Is thine innocency threatened with the deserts of iniquity, or is it decreed that thine integrity must undergo the reward of violence; yet remember thou, that as thine adversary grieveth thee, so hast thou often offended thy God, who serves himself of the wrongful thoughts of men to effect his eternal and most just designs. They shall answer for the wrong they do, and so shalt thou for not suffering with patience the wrongs of men which the Almighty in justice doth inflict: human laws and natural reason do teach, that injustice is seen as well in not being willing to undergo penalty for offences or wrongs committed, as being willing to commit them. And shall we be so forward to aggravate, yea to revenge wrongs done unto us, perhaps by our equals, peradventure by our betters, whereas we ourselves shall offer wrong to the Almighty, if by no other offences, yet even in this, if we submit not ourselves with all humility to his just decrees? Beloved, had we the true conceit of our duty towards him deeply imprinted in our hearts, and would we add thereunto diligent observance of our daily and hourly neglects thereof, impossible were it that any affliction whatsoever, rightly or wrongfully procured, by friend or foe, superior or equal, man, or other second causes, could ever befall us, which we might not easily reduce to this *pœna talionis*. Every particular cross would direct us to some particular sin answerable unto it, from which the Lord in mercy

would purge us. Thou wilt haply say, 'My misery and scorn hath been unjustly sought by my far inferior and insulting enemy!' Yet remember, that sentence hath been pronounced against thee in the highest heavens; despise not therefore these corrections, though ministered unto thee by the basest upon earth. It was enjoined thee by the infinite wisdom of thy Maker, and allowed of by the unspeakable love of thy Redeemer, and why shouldest thou make any curious dispute concerning the person, mind, or quality of thy executioner? Or if thy working spirits must have vent, answer him with the prophet Micah, chap. vii. 8: *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.* But stay thy soul from murmuring, and keep thy heart from boiling with revenge, with that which followeth: *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me.* Here, omitting the examination of any man's disposition in his particular affliction—for as every man knows best himself what have been his private grievances, so his carriage in them toward God is best known to his own conscience—be it granted, (which God grant the Searcher of all hearts may find true in 729
the day of visitation!) that all of us are free from any actual sins of far lower rank than this here mentioned in wronging others; yet here we should consider who is our Corrector, even he that better knows all possible effects of our future thoughts, to us unknown, than we can know our former actions past, such as have proceeded from greatest and longest deliberation. We should call to mind who is our Physician, even he that fashioned all our members, he that set the frame of our hearts, and knows exactly the radical temper of

our souls. Seeing then we hold it as a principle of our faith, that no harm can befall us which is not part of his correction, and all his corrections (if used aright) are wholesome medicines; though our consciences acquit us of any like offences past, yet when any harms befall us, we should take warning (by the manner of his punishment) of some offence suitable thereunto that may follow, which once committed would procure our greater torture. Though our present constitution (to our seeming) be so sound and perfect, as it needs no medicine, yet if he shall give us to drink of any unpleasant cup, we should by the quality of the potion search out the nature of the distemper arising. Have we been despitefully crossed in our earnest suits, or wrongfully defeated in our fairest hopes, we have cause to suspect some ambitious (or like) humour a breeding, whereof our heavenly Physician would prevent us by subtracting of nourishment. Let us be wary, that in this case we adventure not too far against his prescription, lest it grow in time to our own smart and others' annoyance.

§. 21. Here our affections usually appeal to our consciences, that the desires of our own good are free from the intention of others' harms; and surely, methinks, it should be a property of devils, (of devils incarnate,) whether principally or only, directly or jointly to set for their mark another's mischief. But great desires are always suspicious, and, wandering long unsatisfied, are infallibly dangerous. Our first and principal aims are always at our own good; and whilst the mark is clear, and may be got with ease, without more ado, others may live secure of danger; but if we chance at our first setting out to range long with ill speed, (which is great hunters after preferment's usual luck,) and we come at length to light on

game worth the striking, after our desires have their full charge of answerable hopes, so we may have any tolerable certainty of hitting where we like, it will be but a mere chance if some or other miss of a mischief; for whatsoever in the mean time shall come between us and home, we will not stick to hazard all that comes under our level. To abridge this discourse—which here had enlarged itself, but that I know it more necessary in most places than in this, though superfluous in no place in these our days—I will conclude the positive thereof with the words of the apostle, 1 Tim. vi. 9. 11: *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.—But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.* Now out of this positive truth to gather somewhat to strengthen our resolutions. Beloved, we live in a worthy society, whose foundations have not been laid in blood, nor her walls raised by others' ruins; whose first liberal endowments, as they were not the abstract of others' overthrows, so God be praised the continuance of her large (because sufficient) revenues are not reared out of oppression. But that which may be most to the comfort of every particular member hereof, and may fully countervail the excess of many others' supposed happiness, our entrance hereinto hath not been wrought by the enticing messengers of the God of this world. The rate which here we live at, though mean perhaps in respect of many our inferiors, yet herein highly to be esteemed, that what we have hath been provided for us. Our fare, though moderate, yet ingenious; free from the upbraiding of our consciences. We have more than ordinary ground of good assurance we are

not intruders, but welcome guests, and have been hither invited by the great Master of the royal feast; if it shall please him who hath thus freely placed us here to bid us afterwards ascend unto some higher place, we may then arise with honour. But herein let us in the mean time honour him, by not fashioning ourselves unto this present world, nor seeking to advance ourselves before he hath bidden us sit up higher. He hath given us an happy omen at our first entrance; we have had large experience of his gracious providence; our condemnation will be the greater, if in these happy days of our peace and quiet allotted us for Christian studies, we learn not to proportion the rest of our proceedings unto this good pattern which the Lord hath set us in our beginnings. Wise was the wish of that heathen Socrates, 'that he might have as much wealth as none but an honest, virtuous, and temperate man might bear.' And let us, who have been brought up in a better Athens, frame our thoughts unto the imitation of a wiser Teacher, *that we know as well how to want, as* seek *how to abound.* He that hath his resolutions so rightly settled, as that he can get the habit of living well with a little, he alone shall use prosperity with moderation. Let such as have got the means of their learning at hucksters' hands, practise merchandise for their maintenance, and cope for preferment at ordinary markets. They whose very first steps into the nurseries of learning have been the treading underfoot of those wholesome laws, without which they could not have any right to the good things of that place, let them finish their haughty but ill-grounded hopes in that woe of the prophets, *in joining house to house, and land to land.* Such as in their first acquaintance with arts have used the Muses for handmaids to their baser delights, and made the

purest parts of their souls bawds unto their bodies, let them account of religion as a stale for other catches, and in their second and worldly wiser cogitations use spiritual preferment as a preparative to stir up their appetite, or sharpen their desires of secular pleasures. For us, beloved, who are witnesses to ourselves of better beginnings, let the strength and vigour of all our hopes be the firm expecting of God's providence; let the eagerest suits for preferment be our earnest endeavours in the continual framing of a contented mind; let the secure and quiet banquet of a good conscience be the chief of our mirth; that so our feasts of joy may never be haunted with the curse of the fatherless, nor our huntings after preferment be ever followed with the cry of blood, as in our days many are with the hideous outcries (God best knows) of how many thousand souls starved for want of heavenly food, whilst either their greedy desires have hindered the sowing of the seed which should have yielded them nourishment, or their unnecessary wanton pleasures have given occasion of trampling it in the tender blade.

§. 22. I will leave to your cogitations with what 731
faces these sons of Jacob beheld their brother, having now authority to dispose of them at his pleasure, whom they knew they had so grievously wronged. We all believe a greater than Joseph shall one day be our Judge, and may any man presume that he cannot wrong him? No verily! though this be the miserable state of covetous and ambitious minds, that, besides the grievousness of the wrongs which they do, the consequences of their unjust dealing extend unto so many, that they may seldom or never know whom they have injured most; yet of this one thing may they be assured, that the silliest wretch on earth is

never wronged, but our Saviour Christ (who shall be their Judge) is always a party. He himself hath told us, where (in all reason) his words should be of most force to deter us, that *whatsoever hath been done unto the poor, he will take it as done unto himself* in that last day, after which there will be no time for satisfaction. "Grant, O blessed Father, that the testimony of a pure conscience, and an upright life, finished in the hope of our Redeemer, may protect us from shame and confusion in that dreadful day. This grant, good Father, for thy Son's sake: to whom, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be rendered all honour and glory from this time forth and for evermore. Amen."

CHAP. XLII.

2 CHRON. XXIV. 22.

The Lord look upon it, and require it.

The sayings of dying men remarkable.

1. THE sayings of men in perfect health of mind are then most pithy, and their testifications most valid, when their bodily limbs and senses are at the weakest pitch. And the admonitions or presages of wise governors, whether temporal or ecclesiastic, sink deeper into sober hearts, being uttered upon their deathbeds, than if they were delivered upon the bench or throne. These few words amount unto an higher point of consideration than these generalities import; for they are the last words of a great high priest and a great prophet of the Lord, of a prophet not by general calling only, but uttered by him whilst the spirit of prophecy did rest upon him. They are the words of Zechariah, the son and lawful successor to that heroical high priest Jehoiada, who had been the chief protector of the kingdom of Judah, a foster-father unto the present

king, the restorer of David's line, when it did hang but by one slender thread, unto its ancient strength and dignity.

2. The points most considerable in the survey of this text are three: Three points considerable.

First, The plain and literal sense, which wholly depends upon the historical circumstances as well precedent as subsequent.

Second, The emblematical portendment of that prodigious fact which did provoke this dying priest and prophet of the Lord to utter these words; or, which is all one, the fulfilling of his imprecation according to the mystical sense.

Third, The discussion of such cases of conscience, or controversed divinity, as are naturally emergent out of the mystical or literal sense, and are useful for this present, or future ages.

To begin with the circumstance of the time wherein they were uttered; that apparently was the days of king Joash, heir and successor unto Ahaziah king of Judah, who was next successor, save one, unto good Jehoshaphat by lineal direct descent; but no successor at all to him in virtue or goodness, or happiness of government; for Ahaziah was *pessimi patris haud melior proles*, "a very wicked son of a most wicked father," and too hard to say whether he or his father Jehoram were the worse king or more unfortunate governor. But Joash the orphan son of Ahaziah hath the testimony of the Spirit of God, that he ruled well whilst Jehoiada the high priest did live, 2 Kings xii. 2. And his zeal to the house of the Lord (recorded at large in this chapter, as also in the 2 Kings xii. 4.) was so great, as more could not be expected or conceived either of Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, or good Josiah. And thus he continued from the seventh year 732 The circumstance of time.

of his age until the five or six and thirtieth at the least; a competent time (a man would think) for a full and firm growth in goodness.

But amongst the sons and successors of David we may observe, that some begun their reign very well, and ended ill; others, being extreme bad in their beginning, did end better than the other begun. So Manasses, in the beginning and middle of his reign, filled the city with innocent blood, and died a penitentiary. This present king Joash begun and continued his reign for thirty years, or thereabouts, in the spirit, but ended in the flesh, (or rather in blood,) leaving a perpetual stain upon the throne and race of David. This strange apostasy or revolt argues, that his forementioned goodness and zeal unto the house of the Lord was adventitious, and not truly rooted in his own breast. That the fair lineaments of a pious man and noble prince were drawn, not by his own skill, but by the manuduction of Jehoiada the high priest; as children ofttimes make fair letters while their tutors guide their hands, but spatter, and blot, and dash, after they be left to their own guidance.

Jehoiada (saith the text) *waxed old, and was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died. And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.* 2 Chron. xxiv. 15, 16.

The solemnization of his death was a strong argument of the respect and love which both prince and people did bear unto him whilst he lived; and much happier might both of them have been, had they continued the same respect unto his son and successor; but they buried their love unto Jehoiada, and (which was worst) the zeal which he had taught unto the

house of God, in his grave. For so it followeth, ver. 17, 18: *Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols.* Yet God's love to them doth not determine with the beginning of their hate unto the house of God and to his faithful servants. For notwithstanding that *wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass; yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear. And the Spirit of God came upon* (or clothed) *Zechariah the son of Johoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord. Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his* 733 *father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said,* (or, *inter moriendum, dixit,*) *The Lord look upon it, and require it.* ver. 19—22.

3. But did the Lord hearken to him, or require his blood at the king's and princes' hands which slew him? Yes, that he did, oftener than once; for it was required of their posterity; but for the present he did visit both the king and his princes most remarkably by an unexpected army of the Syrians, unto whose idolatrous rites they had now conformed themselves, complying too well with them, and with their neighbours the heathen, in all sorts of wickedness.

But here the politician will reply, that the Syrians

did upon other occasions intend to do some mischief to the king, the princes, and people of Judah; for it was never unusual to that nation to vex or molest Israel or Judah,

——Nunc, olim, quocunque dabant se tempore vires—

as often as opportunity served, as often as they could spy advantage. And to assign the probable or meritorious causes of such plagues as befall any nation by their inveterate enemies unto the judgment of God for this or that sin, is not safe, specially for men not endued with the spirit of prophecy.

In many cases, I confess, it is not; yet in this particular we need not be afraid to say as much as the Spirit of God or sacred authority of his word hath taught us: (we say no more, as indeed we need not, for the point is so plainly and punctually set down by the penman of this book, from verse 23 to the 26th, as it needs no comment, no paraphrase, or marginal conjecture, any of which would rather soil than clear the meaning of the text:) *And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus,* &c.

4. The observations or plain uses which these literal circumstances of this story afford are many; I shall touch upon some principal ones:

Observations and uses out of the story and circumstances.

As, first, To admonish kings or other supreme magistrates to reverence and respect their clergy; seeing Joash did prosper so well while he followed the advice and counsel of the high priest Jehoiada; but came to this fearful and disastrous end, first by contemning the warning of Zachariah the chief priest, and afterward by shedding of the innocent blood of this great pro-

phet of the Lord. But this will be a commonplace, not so proper to this time and place wherein we live; wherein there is such happy accord between the supreme majesty and the prelacy and clergy of this kingdom, as no good patriot can desire more than the continuance of it.

Secondly, There lies open a spacious field for such as affect to expatiate in commonplaces, or dilate upon that old maxim, *Laici semper sunt infensi clericis*, "to tax the inveterate enmity of secular men against the clergy;" whose violent outburstings into prodigious outrages did never more clearly appear than in the wicked suggestions of the princes of Judah, unto unfortunate king Joash, against this godly high priest Zachariah for his zeal unto the house and service of the God of their forefathers. But however the like prodigious cruelty had not been exemplified before this time, yet in many later ages the prelacy or clergy have not come an inch short of these lay princes in working and animating kings and supreme magistrates to exercise like tyranny, and oppressing cruelty, not 734
upon laics only, but upon their godly and religious priests or inferior clergy.

The histories almost of all ages and nations, since the death of Maurice the emperor unto this last generation, will be ready to testify, whensoever they shall be heard or read, more than I have said against the Romish hierarchy, whose continual practices have been to make Christian kings the executioners of their furious spleen against their own clergy, or neighbour princes; or to stir up the rebellion of lay subjects against all such of their liege lords or sovereigns as would not submit themselves, their crowns and dignities, or (which is more) their consciences, unto Peter's pretended primacy.

The sum of all I have to say concerning this point is this; as there seldom have been any very good kings, or extraordinary happy in their government, (whether in the line of David, or in Christian monarchies,) without advice and assistance of a learned and religious clergy; so but a few have proved extremely bad without the suggestions of covetous, corrupt, or ambitious priests. So that the safest way for chief governors is, to keep as vigilant and strong guards upon their own breasts and consciences, as they do about their bodies or palaces.

Now the special and safe guard which they can entertain for their souls and consciences is, to lay to heart the examples of God's dealing with former princes, with the kings of Judah especially, according to the esteem or reverence, or the disesteem which they did bear unto his laws and services.

5. Another special means to secure even greatest monarchs from falling into God's wrath, or revenging hand, is, not to hearken unto, not to meditate too much upon, or at least not to misconstrue a doctrine very frequent in all ages, to wit, that kings and supreme magistrates are not subject to the authority of any other men, nor to the coercive authority of human laws. The doctrine I dare not, I cannot in conscience, deny to be most true and orthodoxal; and for the truth of it I can add one argument more than usual—that God's judgments in all ages or nations have not been more frequently executed by counter passion, or retaliation, upon any sort or state of men, than upon kings or princes, or greatest potentates, which pollute their crowns and dignities with innocent blood, (as king Joash did,) or with other like outcrying sins; as if the most just and righteous Lord, by innumerable examples tending to this purpose, would give the world

to understand, that none are fit to exercise jurisdiction upon kings or princes besides himself; and withal, to instruct even greatest monarchs, that their exemption from all controlment of human laws cannot exempt or privilege them from the immediate judgment of his own hands, or from the contrivance of his just punishments by the hands of others, as by his instruments, though his enemies' agents.

I forbear to produce more instances of divine retaliation[a] upon most sovereign princes besides this one in my text, which abundantly justifieth both parts of my last assertion or observation. Joash (as you heard before, and may read when you please) did more than permit, did authorize or command the princes of Judah to murder their high priest Zachariah in the court of the Lord's house. A prodigious liberty or license for a king to grant, and more furiously executed by the princes of Judah, his patentees or commissioners for this purpose. And yet the most righteous Judge of all the world did neither animate nor authorize the prophets, priests, or Levites, or other chief men in this kingdom, to be the avengers of blood, or to exe- 735
cute judgment upon the king or princes of Judah.

This service, in divine wisdom and justice, was delegated to the Syrians, their neighbour nation. And the host, not by their own skill or contrivance, but by the disposition of Divine Providence, did geometrically and exactly proportion the execution of vengeance to the quality and manner of the fact. The princes of Judah who had murdered Zachariah in the courts of the temple of the Lord's house were all destroyed by the Syrian host in their own land, and the spoil of their palaces sent unto the king of Damascus. And

[a] Touching retaliation, see the 6th book (or treatise of God's Attributes [vol. vi. p. 97.]

king Joash, (by whose authority Zachariah was stoned to death in his pew or pulpit,) after the Syrians had grievously afflicted him, was slain in his own palace, upon the bed of his desired or appointed rest, by the hands of two of his own servants, yet neither of them by birth his native subject; the one the son of an Ammonitess, the other of a Moabitess; both the illegitimate offspring of two of the worst sort of aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

In all this appears the special finger of God. But though all this were done by God's appointment, yet may we no way justify the conspiracy of Joash's own servants against him, though both aliens, unless we knew what special warrant they had for the execution of God's judgments, which are always most just. However, we have neither warrant nor reason to exclaim against them or their sins, so far or so much as by the warrant of God's word we might against the princes of Judah, for the instigating of their lawful king or liege lord to practise such prodigious cruelty (as hath been expressed) upon Zachariah the Lord's high priest, or against the disposition of the stiffnecked Jewish nation in general, most perspicuous for the crisis at that time.

6. But to exclaim against the princes or people of that age we need not, for their posterity hath amplified the cursed circumstances of this most horrible fact, and charged these their forefathers with such a measure of iniquity as no orator this day living, without their directions or instructions, could have done. *Septies in die cadit justus*, "The just man falls seven times a day," was an ancient and an authentic saying, if meant at all by the author of it of sins and delinquencies, rather than of crosses and grievances which fall upon them, or into which they fall, was

never meant of grosser sins or transgressions. But of that day's work wherein Zachariah was slain these later Jews say, *Septem transgressiones fecit Israel in illo die.* I shall not over-English their meaning if I render it thus: "Israel that very day committed seven deadly sins at once," that is, without interposition or intervention of any good work or thought.

A cluster of deadly sins in the horrible murder of Zachariah the high priest.

First, they allege Zachariah was their high priest; and to kill a priest, though of inferior rank, was a sin amongst all nations more than equivalent to the killing of a mere secular potentate; a sin sometimes more unpardonable than any sin could be committed within this kingdom, besides the making of allom.

Secondly, as these Jews allege, Zachariah was a prophet; and to kill a prophet was the next degree of comparison in iniquity unto the laying of violent hands upon kings and princes; for he which forbids *to touch his anointed*, did also forbid *to do his prophets any harm;* both are given in the same charge.

Thirdly, Zachariah was a second magistrate among his people; and to kill a prime magistrate is more than murder, or at least a mixture of murder and treason.

Fourthly, this priest and great magistrate (by the 736
testimony of their sons who murdered him) was upright and entire in the discharge of all his offices, and a man unblemished for his life and conversation.

Fifthly, they polluted the courts of the Lord's house, within whose precincts Zachariah's blood was shed, without such reverence to the place as Jehoiada his father, upon a far greater exigency, for the preservation of Joash and his kingdom, did observe; for he would not suffer Athaliah, though guilty of murder of the royal seed, and of high treason against the crown of David, to be put to death within the courts

of the temple, but commanded her to be killed at the gates of the king's house, chap. xxiii. 14.

Sixthly, as the Jewish rabbins observe, their forefathers polluted the sabbath of the Lord, for on a sabbath day (as it is probable, not from their testimony only, but from the text) Zachariah was thus murdered.

That which makes up the full number of *seven*, and the measure of their unexpiable iniquity, the sabbath wherein this unexpiable murder was committed was the sabbath of the great feast of atonement.

All these transgressions or deadly sins (for every circumstance seems a transgression or principal sin, not an accessory) were committed in one day, or at once.

Another circumstance these later Jews charge their forefathers withal, that they did not observe the law of the deer or of the hart after they shed Zachariah's innocent blood; for they did not so much as cover it with dust: but this circumstance will fall into the discussion of the third general proposed. The sins or circumstances hitherto mentioned were enough to solicitate the execution of Zachariah's dying prayers or imprecations, *Lord, look upon it, and require it.*

Levit. xvii. 13.

Another circumstance for aggravation of this sin (specially on king Joash's part, omitted by the later Jews) might here be added, for that this good man, this godly priest and prophet of the Lord, Zachariah, was by birth and blood of nearest kindred (as we say, cousin-German) to Joash, as being the son, by lawful descent, of Jehoshabeath, (daughter of Jehoram, sister to Ahaziah, and so aunt to king Joash,) whom Jehoiada the priest had to wife, 2 Chron. xxii. 11.

7. But did these aggravations or curious commentaries of later Jews upon this and the like sins of their forefathers any way help to prevent the like diseases

in such as made them? Rather their exclamations against them, and rigid reformation of them, and their affected zeal unto the prophets whom their fathers had murdered, did cast them into far worse diseases of pride and hypocrisy; whose symptoms were fury, madness, and splenetical passions, which in the issue brought out more prodigious murder, as will better appear in the second general proposed, which was, the emblematical portendment of this cruel and prodigious fact against Zachariah, or the accomplishment of his imprecations according to the mystical sense.

For proof of our last assertion or conclusion of the literal sense, no better authority can be alleged or desired than the authority of our Saviour Christ. No better commentaries can be made upon the mystical sense of the former history than he who was the Wisdom of God made upon it, Matt. xxiii. 29, 30: *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!* (so he hath indicted them seven or eight times in this chapter before; but the height, or rather the depth of their hellish hypocrisy was reserved unto this verse; and 737
the original thus expresseth it:) *because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.*

What if these were so? what will follow? must the children be punished for their fathers' sins, or for the acknowledgment of them? Surely no, if they had repented of them; but to garnish the supulchres of the prophets or the righteous men whom their fathers had killed was no good argument of their true repentance. So far was this counterfeit zeal unto the memory of

deceased prophets from washing away the guilt of blood wherewith their forefathers had polluted the land, that it rather became the nutriment of hatred and of murderous designs against the King of prophets, and Lord of life. And to this effect the words of the evangelist St. Luke, chap. xi. 48, would amount, were they rightly scanned and fully expressed: *Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them,* (to wit, the prophets and righteous,) *and ye build their sepulchres.* In building the sepulchres, and acknowledging their fathers' sins, which killed the prophets, they did bear authentic witness that they were their sons; and in not bringing forth *better fruits of repentance* than the beautifying of their graves, they did bear witness against themselves, *that they were but as graves* (as our Saviour saith in the 44th verse) *which appear not,* (or do not outwardly show what is contained in them,) *and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.*

8. That the scribes and Pharisees (who were respectively priests and lawyers) did more than witness that they were the sons of them which killed the prophets; that they did, though not expressly, yet implicitly, more than allow their fathers' deeds, and were at this instant bent to accomplish them, is apparent from our Saviour's forewarning or threatenings against them, Matt. xxiii. 32, 33: *Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?* or the judicature unto Gehennah? That the scribes and Pharisees, and the people misled by them, were now prone to make up the full measure of their fathers' sins, is apparent from Matt. xxiii. 34, 35: *Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and*

scribes: and some of them ye shall (or will) *kill and crucify; and some of them* shall *ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar*[b]. Verse 36: *Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.* Or as it is in St. Luke's narration of our Saviour's comment upon this story, taken by himself or by others who heard him, in the very same words wherein he uttered it, ch. xi. 49, &c.: *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they* shall (or will) *slay and persecute: that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.* This vehement reiterated asseveration literally and punctually refers unto the words of my text. The implication or importance is as much as if he had said, 'Ye scribes and Pharisees may call to mind that when your forefathers (whose murderous acts ye acknowledge) did slay Zacharias the high priest, he expired with these words in his mouth: *The Lord look upon it, and require it.*'

His innocent blood was then in part required upon 738
king Joash, upon the princes of Judah, and other chief offenders; but shall now again be required in full and exact measure of this present generation, more murderous and bloody than their idolatrous forefathers at any time were.

[b] See the next Sermon upon this text.

9. What shall we say then? that this last generation was guilty of the murder of Zachariah, or to be plagued for their fathers' sins in murdering him? This point will come to be discussed in the third general.

And however that may be determined, this case is clear, that these later Jews did make up the full measure of their forefathers' iniquity in killing God's prophets, especially in murdering Zachariah, who was the most illustrious type of Christ the Son of God, in the manner of his death, and for the occasions which these several generations took respectively to murder them both.

The special occasion which their forefathers took to kill Zachariah the son of Jehoiada or Barachias (for he bore both names, though both in effect the same, or one equivalent to the other) was, because he taxed them for their idolatry, and laboured to bring them again to the worship of the true God.

The only quarrel which the malice of the later Jews could pick against our Lord and Saviour, was, because he taxed their hellish hypocrisies, which their too curious reformation of their forefathers' idolatry had bred; and taught them how to worship God in spirit and truth, not in ceremonies, or mere bodily observance.

Neither generation were so blind as to persecute men whom they did acknowledge to be immediately sent from God; yet were both furiously prone to persecute such as indeed were sent from God, for pretending or promulging their commission from God, or taking the names of prophets upon them, so often as their doctrine did cross their practices or violent passions.

This later generation of scribes and Pharisees (after

they had failed in their proofs of any capital matter of fact or point of doctrine delivered by Christ) condemned him for answering affirmatively to this question proposed, *Tell us, Art thou the Son of God?* or, as St. Mark more punctually expresseth it, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?* ch. xiv. 61. Zachariah (as was now said) was Christ's true picture for quality, for office, and for the relation of names and kindred. For Zachariah was a prophet and a priest, the son of Jehoiada, which signifieth as much as *the knowledge of God;* or, as our Saviour expresseth the reality answering to his name, *the son of Barachias*, that is, *the blessed of God*. And our Saviour was *the Son of the only wise God*, the Wisdom of God, and *the Blessed of God, the very God of blessing*, being *the great Prophet of God* and high priest of our souls.

Lastly, the princes of Judah having by glozing flattery persuaded their king to authorize their projects against Zachariah the high priest and prophet of the Lord, put them in execution upon the solemn feast of atonement or expiation.

The scribes and Pharisees, equal or superior to these lay princes in cruelty, importuned Pilate, by pretended observance and loyal obedience to the Roman Cæsar, to sacrifice *the Son of the Blessed* (whom they had unjustly condemned) unto their malice at that solemn feast, which was prefigured by the feast of expiation, the feast instituted in the memory of their deliverance out of Egypt.

739 CHAP. XLIII.

MATTHEW XXIII. 34—36.

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall (or will) kill and crucify; and some of them shall (or will) ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come (or, by which means will come upon you) all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

2 Chron. xxiv. 22. *The Lord look upon it, and require it.*

Luke xi. 51. *Verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.*

THESE words were uttered by our blessed Lord and Saviour against the scribes and Pharisees, with their associates in blood, a little before the feast of the passover; whether that last passover, wherein this Lamb of God, prefigured by that solemn feast, (as also by the death of Abel and his sacrifice,) was offered upon the cross, is or may be a question amongst the learned, not at this time to be disputed; but rather (if occasion serve) in the explication of the last verse, *For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

For, gathering the true and full connexion of this passage with the former relations, it shall suffice to observe, that as our Saviour never spared the scribes and Pharisees, so at this time above others he reproves them most fully and sharply. The matter of this reproof was their avarice and hypocrisy: the end,

partly to prevent the like desire of vainglory, with other enormities in his disciples; partly to cure (if it were possible) the scribes and Pharisees of their hereditary disease. Hence, whereas they most affected complimental greetings in public places, or glorious titles of *rabbies*, our Saviour, to allay this humour for respectful salutations, presents them woes; instead of glorious titles, he instyles them *hypocrites:* for, striking at seven several branches of their hypocrisy, he seven times in this chapter begins his speech in this style—*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!*

2. The principal and most deadly branch of this bitter root was, their garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous, and building the tombs of the prophets; in which, notwithstanding, they did not so mightily deceive others as their own souls; yet by a fallacy very familiar, and apt to insinuate itself into all our thoughts. For who is he amongst us but will take his love and good respect to good men, whether alive or lately dead, as a sure testimony of his own goodness or integrity, especially in respect of theirs that either have persecuted them living, or defamed them after death? Howbeit, this kind of testimony, generally admitted for current, would make way to bring pharisaical hypocrisy into credit with our souls. Many we have known, either in hope of filling, or fear of emptying their purses, pinch their bellies; but as none can be so miserable as not to desire to fare well rather than ill, so he might have good cheer as good cheap as bad; so, hardly can any be so wicked as not to like 740
better of godliness or virtue in others, than of vice, so the one be no more prejudicial or offensive to him than the other. Now the fame or memory of godly men long ago deceased, or far absent, cannot exasperate the wicked or malicious, nor whet their pride to envy;

for envy (though a most unneighbourly quality) is always conceived from neighbourhood or vicinity. Contrariwise, the righteous, that live amongst the wicked, are (as the wise man speaks) a reproach unto them, because their works are good, and the others' evil [c]. This different esteem of virtue present and absent, the heathens rightly had observed: *Virtutem incolumem odimus; sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.* For as bats and owls joy in the sun's light after it is gone down, though it offend their eyes whilst it shines in full strength, and comforts all other creatures endued with perfect sight; so can the sons of darkness endure the sons of light after their departure out of this world, albeit a perpetual eyesore unto them living in the same age or society. Upon this humour did Satan (that great politician) work, putting such a gull upon these scribes and Pharisees as Domitian the emperor did upon his subjects. For as this tyrant, when he purposed any cruelty or murder, would always make speeches in commendation of mercy or clemency, to prevent suspicion; so the old serpent, having made choice of these scribes and Pharisees, as fittest instruments to wreak his spite upon our Saviour, first sets them a work to build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, whom their fathers had slain, lest they should suspect themselves of any like intent against that Just One of whom they proved the betrayers and murderers. Time had so fully detected their fathers' sins, that it was bootless for them to attempt their concealment. The safest and most plausible course to appease their consciences was freely to protest against them; for they said, *If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not*

[c] Gen. xix. 9. Prov. xxviii. 4. Wisdom ii. 12. 1 John iii. 12.

have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

And is it credible, that men so ingenuous as thus to confess their foreelders shame, and ready, as far as was possible, to make the dead prophets amends for wrong done to them by their ancestors many hundred years ago, should attempt any cruelty against the prince of prophets, whom Moses their master had so strictly commanded them to obey?

No; the world must rather believe Christ was not that great prophet, but a seducer, because so much hated of these great rabbies, which so honoured the memory of true prophets, whom their fathers persecuted. With such vain shows do these blind guides deceive the simple, being bewitched themselves by Satan with groundless persuasions of their own sincerity, and devotion towards God and his messengers[d].

To think this hypocritical crew should wittingly and purposely use these devices as politic sophisms to colour their bad intentions, were to make us think better of ourselves than we deserve, by thinking worse of them than our Saviour meant in that censure: *they do all their works to be seen of men.* This (according to the like phrase most frequent in scripture) doth argue the praise of men to be the issue of their works, but not the end they purposely aimed or intended: for their hypocrisy supposed a misguided zeal or aberration from the mark they sought to hit, caused from their immoderate desire of honour and applause, which did so intoxicate and overrule their minds, and like leaven diffuse itself throughout all their actions, that even the best works they did could

[d] Of pharisaical hypocrisy, see book iv. [vol. iii.] and second sermon on Jer. xxvi.

be pleasant only unto men, not unto God, which trieth the heart, and looks as well that our intention be
741 sound and entire, as that we intend that which is good, because commanded by him. To honour the memory of holy men was a good work, but ill done by them, because it proceeded not from a contrite and penitent heart. To stint the cry of so much righteous blood as had been shed by their ancestors, what could it (alas!) avail to deck the places where their bodies lay buried? That God was grievously offended, they could not doubt; and to think he should be pacified by such sacrifices was to imagine him to be like sinful men, which can wink at public offences for some bribe given to their servants, or some toys bestowed upon their children. Thus to acknowledge their forefathers' cruelty, and not to be more touched with sorrow for it, was to give evidence against themselves, as our Saviour in the 31st verse infers; *Wherefore be ye witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.* Or as St. Luke relates the same passage, *Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.* For not to amend that in ourselves which we reprove in others, but rather to assume liberty to our souls, as if we were acquitted by such reproofs or corrections of their misdeeds, is in deed to allow what in word we disclaim. Had these scribes and Pharisees never taken notice of their fathers' sins, they could have had no occasion to conceit their own holiness so highly: but now, by comparing their own kindness to dead prophets' bones with their fathers' cruelties against their living persons, they seem in comparison like saints, hence em-

boldened to trespass more desperately against the Holy One of God. In this respect our Saviour, in the words immediately going before the text, not content with this ordinary title of *hypocrites*, or *blind guides*, calls them *serpents*, and a *generation of vipers*. As if he had said, 'Ye are children, or seed, of the old serpent the devil, which was a murderer from the beginning; and now ye are ready to take his part against the promised woman's seed.' And whereas they thought themselves of all men most free from stain of the prophets' blood, whose tombs they garnished, our Saviour in my text lays that especially to their charge, indicting them of all the murder committed from the beginning of the world until that present time, or at least till Zachariah's death.

3. The indictment we must believe to be most true and just, because framed by Truth itself: but what the true meaning of it should be, is not expressed by any interpreter we have hitherto met with. Such as a man in reason would soonest expect best satisfaction from (for the most part) pass it over in silence; others (like young conjurers, which raise spirits they cannot lay) cast such doubts as they are not able to assoil. For acquainting you with as much as my reading or observation (upon late desires to satisfy myself in a point so difficult and useful) have attained unto, give me leave to reflect upon 2 Chron. xxiv. 22, and to look foreright also into the words of St. Luke, chap. xi. 51—*Verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation:* which few words include the greatest measure of righteous blood, most unrighteously shed, that ever was laid to any people or nation's charge; and yet laid to the charge of the Jewish nation not indefinitely taken, or according to several successions or generations, but to the present generation of this

people; and so laid by one that could not err, either in giving of the charge, or in point of judicature upon any matter within the charge. For the charge is laid by the wisdom of God, by the supreme Judge of quick
742 and dead, as you may see from the forty-ninth verse: *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall* (*or will*) *slay and persecute: that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.*

The same charge (though with some variation of words, yet with full equivalency of sense) we have in my text, *Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes*, &c.

But however the charge and the emphatical ingeminuation for laying this charge upon this generation of serpents in both evangelists be for equivalency of sense the very same, yet St. Luke (as I take it) rehearseth the charge in the selfsame words wherein our Saviour uttered it, *It shall be* required *of this generation*. And in thus saying, he declared himself to be *vates tam præteritorum quam futurorum*, better knowing the true meaning or importance of Zacharias's imprecation or prophecy, and the time wherein it was to be fulfilled, than Zacharias himself (although both an high priest and a prophet) did, when he uttered it. The imprecation or prophecy of that Zacharias unto whom (as I suppose) the words recited out of St. Matthew and St. Luke have a peculiar reference, are recorded 2 Chron. xxiv. 22, *And when he died*, (or, as the original hath it, *when he was a dying*, or in the

very moment of death) *he said, The Lord look upon it, and* require *it* [e].

The exposition of which words, first, according to the literal or grammatical sense, with the historical circumstances precedent and subsequent;

And secondly, according to the mystical sense, or the emblematical portendment of that prodigious fact, which provoked that godly high priest and prophet to utter the forecited imprecation, *Lord look upon it, and require it;* hath been the subject of my meditations of late delivered in a less and yet a greater audience [f].

The third general (then proposed, but left untouched) comes now to be handled, in this learned auditory, upon another text; and that was, the discussion of such questions or cases of conscience as were emergent, whether out of the literal or mystical sense of Zacharias the son of Jehoiada's dying words; especially of such as be useful, either for this present or future times.

4. And of such questions the first is, who this Zacharias in St. Matthew and St. Luke is; whether it be he that was slain (as is told) 2 Chron. xxiv. 22, or some other of that name?

The second, (supposing the same Zacharias to be meant in all three places,) why the *wisdom of God*, after he had laid the blood of all righteous men and prophets whom their forefathers had slain, or haply whom they intended to slay, should instance in Zachariah the son of Jehoiada, or of Barachiah, as the last man whose blood was to be required [g].

[e] See the sermon upon that text, immediately precedent.

[f] The former sermon, on 2 Chron. xxiv. 22, I suppose, was preached at court, this at Oxford.

[g] Of the Jews' calamities, see vol. i. p. 73 and p. 235.

The third, whether the blood of Zacharias, or other prophets or righteous men slain by their forefathers, or the blood of the Son of God himself, or of his apostles, of whom this present generation were the murderers, was in strict and logical construction of these words required of this present generation; or in other terms, thus; whether the murder of our Saviour, or of his apostles, plotted or practised by this present generation, or rather the cruelties practised by their forefathers upon the prophets and other righteous men, were the true and positive cause of all those unparalleled plagues and calamities which befell the
743 Jewish nation within forty or more years after our Saviour's death—of the desolation of Jewry, and the Jews' utter extirpation thence by Titus and Adrian.

The fourth, in what cases, or how far, the posterity or successors of any people or nation are liable to the punishment of their ancestors' sins, or what manner of repentance is required for the known and gross sins of their fathers.

The fifth, whether it were lawful for any of Christ's apostles (or other of his followers at this day) upon the like provocations as Zacharias had, to curse their persecutors in such manner as he did his, upon their death-beds, or when they are a dying.

The sixth (which might as well have been the first) is, with what intent, or to what end, *the wisdom of God* did send prophets, apostles, and wise men unto this present generation, or their forefathers; as, whether to rescue them from the plagues denounced against them by Zachariah and other prophets, or to bring their righteous blood upon them.

The first question, Who this Zachariah was.

5. To the first question, who this Zachariah was. Some have questioned whether he was Zachariah coeval to Isaiah, and witness of his espousal, Isai. viii.

Others there be of opinion, this Zachariah here meant should be Zachariah the prophet, whose prophecy is extant in the sacred volume, the last in order but one, as he was one of the last in time, and prophesied about this people's return from Babylon. And it is true indeed that this prophet was the son of Barachiah, as appears from the very first words of his prophecy. But this opinion is obnoxious to the same exceptions the former is; viz. it is neither warranted by scriptures, nor by any good writer. Neither is it credible that the Jews then living would kill the prophet of the Lord immediately after their deliverance from captivity; at least, the reverence to the temple, then scarce finished, would have made them abstain from shedding his blood within the walls of it, near the altar.

Others there be amongst the ancients (but few later writers of better note) which think this Zacharias should be John Baptist's father: what reason they should have so to think I cannot conjecture, save only our Saviour's words in the 35th verse—*whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.* This in ordinary speech may seem to imply that this just man had been killed by this people now living, not by their fathers; for so our Saviour haply had said, *whom your fathers slew*, not *whom* YE *slew*. But it is a rule in divinity to gather our Saviour's and his apostles' meaning by the usual phrase of scriptures, not by our common manner of speech. Now it is usual to the prophets and sacred writers to lay the fathers' sins unto the children's charge, if they continue in the like, or repent not for them. And if this people now living must be plagued for the ancient prophets' blood, no question but they were guilty of it, and may be said

to have slain them in the same sense they are indicted as guilty of it.

That our Saviour should not mean John Baptist's father is more than probable, for these reasons:

First, his death is not mentioned in the New Testament, nor in any good ecclesiastical writers.

Secondly, because it no way benefits the authors of this opinion, but rather increaseth the difficulty.

For if he were slain by Herod the Great, who was a Philistine by parentage, why should not John Baptist's death be laid to their charge, being slain by Herod's son? Nay, why not our Saviour's, or his apostles', whom he foretells they would shortly kill and persecute?

This punctually agrees with the copy. 744

This plainly argues that the reason why he names this Zacharias was not his slaughter. And besides this reason there is none why we should think this Zacharias was John Baptist's father. As for the apocryphal stories or traditions which are pretended for this guess or groundless conjecture, we have just cause to suspect that it rather brought forth them, than that they should first deliver it.

Not to trouble your patience with any more reasons for refuting those opinions; it is agreed upon by most late writers I have read, papists or protestants, and by St. Hierome, the best in this kind of all the ancient, that this Zachariah here spoken of was the son of Jehoiada the priest, whose death we have set down 2 Chron. xxiv. 21: *And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord.* In what court it is not specified, but it is most probable, from the circumstance of the text, that it was in the court where the priests offered sacrifices, or in the

place where he instructed or blessed the people; for it is evident that Zachariah was slain in his pew, or public seat appointed for instructing the people.

And hereunto the ancient Jews in their traditions accord. This is that our Saviour saith in my text, that he was slain *between the temple and the altar.* By *the temple* we are to understand the outward courts or aisles, or as we distinguish betwixt the church and the chancel, the body of the temple comprehending *atrium Israelis et mulierum*, the courts wherein the congregation of men and women stood; by the place between these and the altar, the court where the priests taught, or celebrated their service. And so it is said, verse 20, that Zachariah should stand above the people when he delivered that message unto them for which they stoned him to death. The temple and the altar.

Why this Zachariah should be called *the son of Barachiah* divers expositors bring divers reasons, all probable in themselves, and each agreeable with other. Some think his father (as was not unusual amongst the Jews) had two names, or a name and a surname, Jehoiada and Barachiah. Others think that our Saviour did not so much respect the usual name whereby the prophet's father was called, as his conditions or virtues, unto which the name of Barachiah did as well or better agree than Jehoiada, although the one of these cannot much disagree in sense from the other, for the one signifies *the knowledge of the Lord*, the other, to wit, Barachiah, *the blessing of the Lord*, or *man blessed of the Lord.* Well might both names befit that famous high priest, famous both for his wisdom and piety, every way blessed of God, and a great blessing to this people: for, as it is said 2 Chron. xxiv. 16, *he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house*, in which respect he was buried Why Zachariah called the son of Barachiah.

in the city of David amongst their kings. Admitting then Jehoiada either usually had, or were for the reasons intimated capable of these two names, it is not without a special reason, perhaps a mystery, that our Saviour in this place should call Zachariah rather the son of Barachiah than of Jehoiada; for the more blessed his father was of God, the greater blessing he had been to Israel; the more accursed was this ungracious people in killing his virtuous and righteous son in the house of the Lord, for dissuading them from idolatry; and the more fully did they prefigure the sin of this wicked generation, their children, which for the like cause did now go about to kill the Son of God, Christ Jesus, blessed for ever [h]. For hereafter they were to acknowledge him to be the true Barachiah, as it is intimated in the last verse of this chapter, *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

745 Thus much of the first point (who this Zachariah was) gives some light unto the second.

The second question, Why our Saviour instanceth in Zachariah.

6. And the second question (why our Saviour should make such special instance in, or peculiar mention of the blood of Zachariah) is the least difficult of all the rest; and yet a question not so easily answered as the learned Spanish Jesuit, Maldonate, in his comments upon this place would persuade us. His best answer to this question solemnly proposed by him, is this, 'Christ's purpose was only to instance in those prophets whose slaughter was expressly testified in the Bible, lest the scribes and Pharisees might deny them to have been slain by their forefathers: now of prophets whose deaths are mentioned in scripture, Zacha-

[h] See Dr. Hammond's notes on Matth. xxiii. fol. 125, [117] where he cites Josephus, lib. iv. cap. 19. for another Zacharias, killed by the Zelots immediately before the siege, which puts a short end to this question.

rias the son of Jehoiada was the last.' We have just occasion to suspect his conjecture (were it true) to be impertinent, because the reason wherey he seeks to confirm it is evidently untrue, seeing Zacharias the son of Jehoiada was not the last of all the prophets whose bloody deaths are recorded in scripture. For in the 26th chapter of Jeremiah, 23rd verse, there is express mention of one Uriah, the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath-jearim, who for prophesying against Jerusalem was put to death (240 years after Zachariah) by Jehoiachim king of Judah, and by his council of state and of war, and was fetched back from Egypt, whither he had fled for refuge, by Elnathan the son of Achbor, a great counsellor of state, and other commissioners for this purpose, unto Jehoiachim, *who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people*. And this prophet's blood, and other indignities done unto him and to his calling after his death, were required of that present generation, of the king especially: for as Jeremy, perhaps taking his hint from this bloody fact, had foretold, so it came to pass, that Jehoiachim was cast out of Jerusalem, not into the graves of the common people, but into the open fields, for he had no other burial than the burial of the ass, or other like contemptible creature.

Zachariah the only prophet that died with an imprecation.

But however the blood (perhaps) of this prophet amongst many others was to be further required of this present generation, yet Zacharias was the last, and, I think, the first of all the prophets which at the moment of his death did beseech God to require his blood, and to revenge his death. And this, I take, is the true reason why our Saviour, after he had indicted the Jews of the blood of all the prophets and righteous men shed from the foundation of the world, should instance only in Abel the son of Adam, and

Zacharias the son of Jehoiada or Barachia. Christ's instance in Abel literally and punctually refers to that dialogue betwixt God and Cain, Gen. iv. 9—11, *And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.*

But did the voice of Zacharias' blood cry in like manner unto the Lord after his death, or solicit the like curse or vengeance upon them which shed it, or their posterity, as Abel's did? Yes; besides the forementioned imprecation, *Lord look upon it, and* require *it,* which was uttered by him, after a great part of his blood and spirits were spent, his blood spake as bad things as that of Abel's; for so the Jewish rabbins (besides that cluster of seven deadly sins, committed by their forefathers at once, in the murder of Zacharias) mention another circumstance subsequent, not
746 recorded in scripture, or not so plainly as a Christian reader, without their comment or tradition, would take notice of it, which, in my opinion, doth better illustrate that passage of scripture whereon they ground or seek to countenance it, than any Christian commentator hath done: "Our fathers (say they), in shedding Zacharias's blood, did not observe the law of the blood of the deer or hart:" for so it was commanded, Levit. xvii. 13, *Whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.* But Zacharias' blood (though shed in the temple) was not so covered, it was appa-

rent. To this purpose they allege that of the prophet Ezekiel, chap. xxiv. 6, 7, *Woe to the bloody city—her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust; that it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance.*

No question but the prophet's entire purpose was to indict Jerusalem (as our Saviour doth in my text) of all the innocent blood that had been shed before his time within her territories, and withal to note her impudence in committing such foul sins so openly, without care to cover the conspicuous marks of her own shame. Yet this no way argues that the prophets did not point out some memorable and prodigious fact which might serve as an emblem of her shameless carelessness in all the rest. Such allusions to particulars sufficiently known in their own times are very usual in the prophets: this is the special reason why their writings in general are so obscure to us, why some of their metaphors seem harsh or far-fetched, because in truth their speeches in these cases are not merely metaphorical, but include historical references to some famous accidents present or fresh in memory. From the same cause all ancient satirists, or such as tax the capital vices of their own times, are hardly understood by later ages without the comments of such as lived with them, or not long after them; as our posterity within few years will hardly understand some passages in the Fairy Queen, or in Mother Hubbards, or other tales in Chaucer, better known at this day to old courtiers than to young students.

It may be these murderers said of Zachariah as their posterity said of our Saviour, *His blood be on us, and on our children.* It is not likely they would be careful to cover it with dust, or wipe the stain of it

(whilst fresh) out of the walls or stones of the temple, because they had solemnly forsaken the house of the Lord, and made a league to serve groves and idols, willing, perhaps, to let the print of his blood remain to terrify others from being too forward in reproving the king and his council for their offences against God.

But whether the marks of it were left on purpose, or through mere forgetfulness of this people, God in his providence, as the prophet intimates, suffered it so to remain, to *cause fury to come up to take vengeance.* For whereas this fact, or forgetfulness to cover it, was in the words before attributed to Jerusalem—*Her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust*—the prophet, after intimation of the cause why it so remained, to *cause fury* &c., immediately adds, in the person of God, *I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered.* Of these words no meaning can be rendered more natural than this; to wit, that God did suffer the print of Zachariah's righteous blood to remain in the temple, as it were to solicit vengeance for all the rest that had been or should be shed in Jerusalem, to cry unto him,
747 as Abel's did from the earth, which, as it seems, was not covered, certainly the voice of it was not smothered with dust.

How long the stain of blood, especially dashed out of the body by violence, will be apparent upon stones or moist walls, experience doth not often teach, because it is usually covered or wiped off whilst it is fresh. Yet some prints of blood have longer remained (unless domestic traditions be false) on stones, than the blood itself could have done by course of nature in the veins that enclosed it. Albeit we may with good probability presume that Zachariah's blood (if we con-

sider the manner of his death) might continue, by God's permission or appointment, far above the time that any ordinary experience can testify.

More strange it is, which ecclesiastical writers report of this prophet's body, that being crushed with stones, it should be found otherwise entire and uncorrupt in the days of Theodosius, which was above a thousand years after his death. Unless they had greater occasion than I can conceive to lie, I neither dare distrust this report of theirs, nor the other tradition of the Jews, by whose account the stain of his blood remained a greater part of two hundred years in the temple.

However, we may (with good probability) conclude that the true reason why our Saviour mentioned Zachariah's death as one special cause of Jerusalem's last destruction, was not because he was the last, or one of the last of the prophets that had been murdered by the scribes and Pharisees' foreelders, but rather because his murder was the most foul prodigious fact that was committed in that land, and did from the very commission of it portend destruction to the temple; and the consequents of it foreshadowed the miseries which were afterwards to befall the nation. The truth of this conclusion will better appear from discussion of the third point proposed.

The third question.

7. And this was, whether the blood of Zacharias and other prophets, or of our Saviour and others after him, were more especially required of this generation; or, whether this generation and their posterity were so grievously plagued (as we know they were) for their own personal offences against the person of the Son of God, or for communicating with their fathers in shedding the blood of the prophets and of other righteous men.

The modern Jews peremptorily deny their long exile and calamity to have been inflicted upon them as a just punishment for putting Christ to death, because their fathers did not (in their judgment) therein offend.

Divers Christian writers, (as it usually falls out,) refuting this error of theirs, run into a contrary, ascribing the grievousness of their memorable plagues unto their personal offences against our Saviour, being otherwise free from the sins wherein their fathers grievously trespassed. Maldonate the Jesuit is so far addicted to this opinion, that he thinks our Saviour in my text spake but according to vulgar language; as if to a malefactor, which had escaped often, but is afterward taken for some notorious murder which cannot be pardoned, men would say he should now pay for all his villainies; not that they mean he shall suffer several punishments for several offences, or more grievous tortures than were due for his last fact alone; but that he should have judgment without mercy, and be punished as grievously as might be, though for it only. Thus much then, and no more, he thinks our Saviour would have signified, that the scribes and Pharisees should suffer such grievous calamities for murdering Him and his apostles, as they might well seem to be plagued for their fathers' cruelties, howbeit
748 they were not at all punished for them, but only for their own. For, saith he, although neither they nor their fathers had killed either prophet, apostle, or disciple, (but Christ alone,) they had deserved greater plagues for killing him than are recorded by Josephus. This last assertion, I confess, is no less true than non-concludent: for the conclusion to be inferred was not what manner of plagues they did deserve for putting our Saviour to death, but whether these punishments were *de facto* inflicted for putting him to death, or

for the murder of Zachariah and other prophets, whom not their fathers only, but they had slain; for so our Saviour layeth the charge of Zachariah's blood unto them in particular—*whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.*

8. A good auditor must be able, not only to give a true onus or charge, but withal to make right allocations or deductions; otherwise he shall often overreckon himself, or wrong such as are to deal with him. The like skill is required in making such calculatory arguments as Maldonate and many other good Christians use, in aggravating the offences of this present generation of the Jews against our Saviour. Let them lay the charge of the later Jews' trespasses as deep as they list or can, we shall be able to make the deductions or allocations muchwhat equal: so that *computatis computandis*, the greatest part or fullest measure of the blood which came now to be required of this generation must arise (as the literal meaning of my text imports) from the righteous blood of Zacharias and other prophets unjustly shed in former ages, and unrepented of by this present generation.

They must lay their charge from the infinite excess of Christ's dignity in respect of other prophets; for his person was in majesty truly infinite: we are to make the deduction from his infinite power and facility to forgive offences against himself or his person; for questionless he did as far exceed all the prophets in goodness, in mercy, and lovingkindness, as he did in majesty and greatness; and had peculiar power and authority to forgive sins, and remit those plagues which the prophets had denounced against Jerusalem and her children. Nor could the malice of his enemies against him be more available to procure, than his prayers and tears for Jerusalem's peace were to pacify

his father's wrath against it, especially for their offences against his person alone.

A paraphrase or exegesis of Christ's loving and threatening expressions.

9. The flagrant expressions of his special love unto Jerusalem, (not yet alienated from the worst sort of this present generation,) if we compare them with this threatening forewarning in my text, and in the words before it, will bear this sense, or brook this paraphrase: 'However I see and know you more maliciously bent against me than Cain was against his brother Abel, than your forefathers (prince or people) were against Zachariah the son of Jehoiada (or of Barachiah); however you thirst more greedily and more irrelentingly after my blood than the chafed hart doth after the brooks of water; yet whenever you have glutted yourselves with the sight of it poured out upon the ground, instead of covering it with dust, cast not this foul aspersion or slander upon me or it, as if either it or I did or shall solicit vengeance against you for the cruel indignities which ye have done or shall do, either to me or to my followers when I am dead. The blood of my apostles will not speak so bad; and my blood shall speak much better things for you than the blood of Abel did for his brother Cain, than the blood of Zachariah, whom your fathers slew betwixt the altar and the temple, did for the then king and the princes or people of Judah. For my heavenly Father hath not sent me, nor will I give any commis-
749 sion to my followers or ambassadors, to curse, but to bless you; not to wound and destroy, but rather to save and heal you. If your impenitency and perverseness have moved me to speak severely, or threaten you, it is still for your good. *Severum medicum æger intemperans facit;* your obdurate hearts have caused me ofttimes (the mildest physician that ever took cure of the body or soul upon him) to use tart speeches

unto you, yet shall it never provoke me to be cruel in my practice. So far am I from seeking your blood or harm, that my blood, which you have continually sought, whensoever you shed it, shall make an atonement for you, shall procure a free and gracious general pardon for all your sins, and for all the sins of your forefathers in shedding the blood of prophets sent unto them. But when I have done all, when all is done that could be done unto this vineyard which my Father planted, according to the rules of equity, of mercy, and benignity, without wrong or prejudice to eternal justice, unless by sincere repentance, as well for your own sins as for the sins of your forefathers, (wherein you have been too deep partakers with them,) you submit yourselves unto my Father's will, and with all humility crave allowance of that most free and gracious pardon which my blood shall purchase for you and for all the world besides, the cry of Abel's and of Zachariah's blood will at the last prevail against you; the blood of both of them, and of all the prophets whom your forefathers have slain, will be required of this generation in fuller measure than it was of those which slew them: and this will be a burden too heavy for you to bear; much heavier than the punishment of Cain, albeit neither my blood, nor the blood of any of mine, (apostles or disciples,) do come at all upon the score or reckoning, wherewith Moses, in whom ye trust, and the prophets whose tombs and sepulchres ye build and garnish, will be ready to charge you in the day of your account or visitation.' For if the blood of Christ or of his apostles had been required at their hands which shed it, methinks this emphatical ingemination, *Verily I say unto you, It shall be required*, &c., should not be

A paraphrase or exegesis of our Saviour's meaning or implication.

so needful and weighty as were all the words uttered by him, *who spake as never man spake.*

How Christ's death was a cause of the Jews' calamities.

10. But may we from any or all these premises conclude that this present generation was not punished at all for putting our Saviour to death? or that his death, or the indignities done unto his more than sacred person at or before his death, was no cause at all of those exemplary punishments or unparalleled plagues which fell upon Jerusalem and Judah, upon this whole present generation? God forbid!

The question is not, whether our Saviour's death was any cause at all of the exemplary punishments; but, what manner of cause it was; or in what sense they may be said to be plagued for wronging him thus.

We answer, that the indignities done unto him at his death, and at his arraignment, were such causes of the ensuing woes and calamities which came upon this generation, as *absentia nautæ* is *naufragii:* the case or *species facti* is thus: suppose a skilful navigator and experienced pilot, which had long governed some tall and goodly ship with good success in many difficult voyages, should at the length either by the greediness of the owner be cashiered, or enforced to leave his place, and a storm upon his departure should arise, and through want of good steerage or sounding should run them on ground, or dash them against the rocks, we may say without solecism, that the abandoning or absence of the former master or pilot was the cause of the shipwreck, or the loss of men or goods, although he neither were any cause of raising the storm, nor prayed against them, (as Zacharias did against his persecutors,) nor gave them any wrong directions before he left them.

Now the Son of God, from the time of his people's thraldom in Egypt, but more especially from the time of their deliverance thence, had been in peculiar manner the King and Governor of the Jews, in all their consultations of peace or war, their only pilot in all their storms: and however throughout their several generations they were often grievously punished, yet were they always punished, *citra condignum*, much less than their iniquities had deserved. Briefly, by his wisdom he preserved them safe in such distresses, as without his only skill would utterly have overwhelmed the state and nation: and by his intercession prevented the outbursting or fall of that hideous storm, which had been secretly, and by degrees more insensible, gathering against them, than that cloud which Elijah's servant saw rising out of the sea, even from the death of Zachariah the son of Jehoiada, and other prophets and righteous men, whose blood their forefathers before and after his had shed. 750

The Son of God in a peculiar manner to the Jews King of old.

But after this last generation had both by express words and practice verified that saying of God to Samuel, *They have not cast off thee from being king over them, but they have cast off me*, that other prophecy, or sweetly mild forewarning, for which they took occasion to stone Zachariah to death in the courts of the Lord's house, was exactly fulfilled in and upon them. This prophecy or forewarning we have, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20: *Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.* This prophecy, with that other of Samuel, was most exactly fulfilled: *Tam verbis quam factis male ominatis, et mala ominantibus*, when they solemnly protested before Pilate, that *they had no other king but Cæsar*. From this time the hideous storms

of God's wrath and anger against them, for their own sins, and the sins of their forefathers, did daily increase, and at last were poured out in full measure upon them, when they had no prophet nor any man that understood any more; no signs or tokens but such as were dismal[k]—no pilot or skilful governor to direct them—no pious priest to make intercession for them. For having thus solemnly abandoned the Son of God their King and Lord, who had been their continual sanctuary, the destroying angels, who had long waited their opportunity to put their commission in execution, did arrest their bodies, delivering up some to the famine, some to the sword, others to the fowls of the air and beasts of the field; and did seize upon their land, which God had given to their forefathers, for the use of others, even for the most wicked of the heathens[l], first bestowing it upon the Romans, afterward upon the Saracens, and last of all upon the barbarous Turk, under whose heavy yoke the inheritance and some of the posterity of Jacob have long groaned, and still must groan until they confess their own sins and the sins of their forefathers, and return unto the allegiance of their gracious Lord and Sovereign whom their forefathers (this present generation in my text) had crucified. But so returning unto him by true repentance, he will return unto them in mercy, and be as gracious and favourable to the last generations of this miserable people, as he was of old unto the first or best of their forefathers. For in this case especially, and in this and the like alone, that saying of our apostle, which some in our days most unadvisedly and impertinently misapply, and confine to their own particular state in grace, or God's favour, is most true, *The gifts of God are without repent-*

[k] Ps. lxxiv. 10. [l] Luke iv. 6. Ezek. vii. 21, 24. Dan. iv. 17.

ance. That Lord and God whom they solemnly forsook, hath not finally forsaken them, but with unspeakable patience and longsuffering still expects their conversion; for which, Christians, above all others, 751
are bound to pray—'Convert them, good Lord, unto the knowledge, and us unto the practice of that truth, wherewith thou hast enlightened our souls, that our prayers for them and for ourselves may ever be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our redeemer. Amen, Amen.'

CHAP. XLIV.

The second Sermon upon this Text.

MATTHEW XXIII. 34—36.

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets ..... and some of them ye shall kill, &c. *that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth,* &c. *Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.*

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2 CHRON. xxiv. 22. *And as he was dying, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it.*

LUKE xi. 51. *Verily I say unto you,* IT (that is, ver. 50, *the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world,*) *shall be required of this generation.*

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1. OF several queries or problems emergent out of these words, (proposed unto this audience a year ago,) one (and that one of greatest difficulty) was, how the sins of former generations can be required of later, specially in so great a distance of time as was between

the death of Abel and of Zachariah[a] and this last generation, which crucified the Lord of life: the discussion whereof is my present task.

In this disquisition, you will, I hope, dispense with me for want of a formal division or dichotomy, because the channel through which I am to pass is so narrow, and so dangerously beset with rocks and shelves on the right hand and on the left, as there is no possibility for two to go on breast, nor any room for steerage, but only towage. One passage in my disquisition must draw another after it, by one and the same direct line.

For, first, if I should chance to say any thing which either directly or by way of consequence might probably infer this affirmative conclusion, 'That God doth at any time punish the children for the fathers' sins, or later generations for the iniquities of former,' this were to contradict that fundamental truth which the Lord himself hath so often protested by oath, Ezek. xviii. 1, 2, &c.: And *the word of the Lord came unto me again, saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.* And again, ver. 32: *I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.*

[a] See above, [p. 280.] where this was the fourth question propounded. From Abel's to Zachariah's death were three thousand years; from Zachariah's to these words spoken were eight or nine hundred.

Now to contradict any branch of these or the like protestations or promises, would be to make shipwreck of faith, more dangerous than to rush with full sail upon a rock of adamant.

On the other hand, if I should affirm any thing, 752
either directly or indirectly, which might infer any part of this negative, 'That God doth not visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, or of former generations upon later,' this were to strike upon a shelf no less dangerous than to dash against the former rock, directly to contradict God's solemn declaration (in the second commandment) of his proceedings in this case, which are no less just and equal than the former promise, Ezekiel xviii. By this, you see the only safe way for passage through the straits proposed must be to find out the middle line or mean, whether *medium abnegationis* or *participationis;* or, in one word, the difference betwixt this negative, 'God doth not punish the children for the fathers' sins;' and the other affirmative, *God visiteth the sins of the fathers upon the children, even unto the third and fourth generation,* &c.

2. But in the very first setting forth or entry into this narrow passage, some here present perhaps have already discovered a shelf or sand, to wit, that the passage forecited, out of the second commandment, doth better reach or fit the case concerning Josiah's death, and the calamity of his people, than the present difficulty or problem now in handling[b]: for Josiah was but the third in succession from Manasseh, and died within fewer years than a generation in

[b] See a following sermon on 2 Kings xxiii. 26. A generation contains thirty years: betwixt Manasseh's and Josiah's death were about thirty-three years.

ordinary construction imports after his wicked grandfather. But if the blood of Zachariah the son of Jehoiada, or other prophets slain in that age, or the age after him, were required of this present generation, God doth visit the sins of forefathers upon the children after more than three or four, after more than five times five generations, according to St. Matthew's account in the genealogy of our Lord and Saviour[c]. Yet this seeming difficulty (to use the mariner's dialect) is rather an overfall than a shelf, or at the worst but such a shelf or sand as cannot hinder our passage, if we sound it by the line or plummet of the sanctuary, or number our fathoms by the scale of sacred dialect in like cases. For when it is said in the second commandment, that God doth *visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him;* this is *numerus certus pro incerto aut indefinito,* an expression or speech equivalent to that of the prophet Amos: *For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof. For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four; for three transgressions of Ammon, and for four,* &c.; throughout almost every third verse of the first chapter, and some part of the second. The prophet's meaning is, that all the kingdoms or several sovereignties there mentioned by him, especially Judah and Israel, should certainly be punished, not for three or four only, but for the multitude of their continual transgressions, and many of them transgressions of a high and dangerous nature. Both speeches, as well

[c] The objection is hardened by taking in Abel's blood. Zachariah was slain nine hundred years, Abel three thousand eight hundred years, before Christ spoke the words of the text.

that in Amos as in the second commandment, (reverently to compare *magna parvis*,) are like to that of the poet,

O terque quaterque beati ;

that is, most happy. So that *unto the third and fourth generation* may imply more than seven times seven generations; as many several successions of men or families as have lived since Abel's death unto this present day. All this being supposed or admitted, yet the expression of God's mercies in the same commandment, *unto the children of such as love him and keep his commandments*, is a lively character of that truth which we must believe, to wit, that God's mercy as far exceedeth his justice towards men, as a thousand doth three or four, unless they desperately make up the full measure of their own and their forefathers' sins, either by posi- 753
tive transgressions, or by slighting or not repairing in time unto the outstretched wings of his mercy. In this case they provoke or pull down the heavy stroke of his outstretched arm of justice.

3. This difficulty in the entry into or bar of this narrow passage being cleared, we may safely proceed by the former way proposed; that is, by searching the mean or sounding the difference between these two absolute truths: first, 'God never punisheth the children for their fathers' sins;' secondly, 'God usually visiteth the sins of the fathers upon the children,' &c.

What it is to punish children for their fathers' sake.

The most punctual difference of these two undeniable truths, to my apprehension and observation, is this: to punish the children for their fathers' sins implies a punishment of some persons (be they more or few) without any personal guilt in them, or actual transgressions committed by them. And thus to do in awarding punishments temporary, whether capital

or corporal, (for with punishments everlasting, or in the world to come, I dare not meddle or interpose my verdict,) were open injustice. The sons of traitors or rebels against the crown and dignity of the state wherein they live, are not by human laws obnoxious to any corporal or capital punishment, unless they be in some degree guilty of their fathers' treason or rebellion, not by misprision only, but by association. And however good laws do deprive guiltless children of the lands and titles of honour which their fathers enjoyed, yet are they oftentimes upon their good demeanour restored to their blood, and to the lands and dignities of their ancestors, even by such princes as are no fit patterns of that clemency which becometh princes; not so much as good foils to set forth or commend the clemency and benignity of God, if we consider it as it is avouched by Ezekiel, chapter xviii. However earthly princes may demean themselves towards the guiltless or well-deserving sons of traitors or rebels, the reason or intendment of severest public laws in this case provided was not to lay any punishment upon the children, but rather a tie or bond upon their fathers not to offend in this high kind, so often as otherwise they would do, save only for the love they bear unto their children and posterity, or for the fear of tainting their blood, or dishonouring their friends and families. Of the equity or good intendment of such laws, we have the fairest pattern in the forecited place of Ezekiel, chap. xviii. 31, 32: *Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves and live ye.*

4. To visit the sins of the fathers upon their children always supposeth some degree of personal guilt in the children; yet such a guilt or such transgressions as would not be punished so grievously, either for measure or manner as usually they are, unless their fathers had set them bad examples by sinning in the same or like kind. But the circumstances or conditions which most aggravate or bring the heaviest visitation of fathers' sins upon the children are these: What it is to visit the sins of fathers, &c.

First, if their fathers have been punished *citra condignum*, that is, in a less measure or lower degree than their personal transgressions had deserved. Two particulars hastening and justifying the visiting of the father's sins upon the children.

The second, if their fathers' punishments have been upon register or record so remarkably suited unto their sins, that their children might (as they ought) have taken notice of the occasions of God's displeasure against them, or punishing hand upon them.

To draw these generals more close unto the hypothesis, or to join them together by annexing some particular instances unto them. 754

Few here present can be so ignorant, either of domestic or public statutes amongst us, but may easily observe that the same offence being reiterated, or often committed by one and the same party, is or ought to be more grievously punished for the second turn than for the first; more grievously for the third time than for the second; more for the fourth than for all the three former.

This manner of proceeding in colleges or academical societies is most agreeable to the ancient constitutions of this kingdom, for the manner of processes in courts ecclesiastic.

The not appearing upon lawful summons in courts ecclesiastic was for the first neglect but a mulct of

twentypence, according to the rate of money in those days; the second mulct for not appearing upon like summons did double the first; and so did the third the second: the mulct for the fourth neglect did more than double or treble all the former: for the party thus offending the fourth time in the same kind became liable to the writ *De Excommunicato Capiendo* without more ado. And this was an heavy punishment if it were executed according to William Rufus' Constitutions.

Now the covenant of life and death [d] which God made with the seed of Abraham, or with the sons of Jacob, upon their deliverance out of Egypt, (afterwards, in more express words, with the house of David, or tribe of Judah, throughout their generations,) is the true pattern or authentic leading case of all just and legal proceeding with one and the same party for often committing the same offence, especially in case he had been solemnly forewarned, whether without any punishment at all, or with some light punishment annexed for the first time. Every forewarning makes the following offence, though in itself not so great, a great deal more heinous, and liable to more grievous punishment.

5. To take a more particular view of the peculiar aspect which these heavenly lights (God's laws, I mean) had to the seed of Jacob, or kingdom of Israel and Judah; for in respect of other kingdoms or nations their aspect admits some variation. To keep the seed of Jacob upright in the ways of faithful Abraham, the

[d] Note here, 1. That God made this covenant with them and their posterity in successive generations as with one man, or one aggregate body or corporation. 2. It was not only a covenant of life and promises, but of threatenings and death also. God left Israel a register of good and evil.

God of their fathers left them a twofold register to be perpetually continued by his prophets or other sacred writers: the one, containing their forefathers' good deeds, and the prosperity which always did attend them; the other, of their forefathers' grossest sins or transgressions, and of the calamities which pursued them. The former register was to encourage them to do that which was good and acceptable in his sight; the other, to deter them from evil, from turning aside from him and his laws. The manner of God's augmenting the punishments or plagues upon succeeding generations, which would not take warning by the punishments of their forefathers, usually runs by the scale of seven.

Every man that seeth me, saith Cain, after the Lord had convented him for killing his brother, *will kill me;* whereas there was not a man in the world besides his father and himself; but a man's conscience (as we say) is a thousand witnesses: and his conscience did sufficiently convict him to have deserved execution, whereas there was neither witness nor executioner.

According to this sentence, engraven in this murderous heart, did God afterwards enjoin Noah, and gave it in express commandment, under his hand to 755
Moses, *Whosoever doth shed man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.* If this law were just amongst the Israelites, why was it not executed upon Cain, the first malefactor in this kind? Nay, why doth God expressly exempt him from it, and punish him with exile only? Doubtless this was from his gracious universal goodness, which always threats before it strike, offereth favour before he proceed to judgment, and mingleth judgment with mercy before he proceed in rigour of justice. Now Cain had no former warn-

ing how displeasant murder was to God, and therefore is not so severely punished as every murderer after him must be. For so it is said, Gen iv. 15: *Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.* Yet for any of Seth's posterity to have killed murderous Cain, had been a sin in its nature far less than for Cain to murder his righteous brother; yet (by rule of divine justice) to be more grievously punished than Cain's murder was, because in him they had their warnings.

How neglect of God's forewarnings past, hastens judgments: see this author's second sermon upon Jer. xxvi. [vol. vi. p. 70, &c.]

6. The same proportion God observes in visiting the sins of fathers upon their children. So in that great covenant of life and death made with the Israelites, Levit. xxvi. 14—16, after promise of extraordinary blessings to the observers of his law, the Lord thus threateneth the transgressors: *But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption,* &c. But if for all this they will not yet turn unto him, he will plague them still with the pursuit of their enemies. Nay it followeth, ver. 18, *And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, then will I punish you seven times more for your sins;* and if all this will not reclaim them, these later plagues shall be seven times multiplied; and this third plague three hundred and forty-three times greater than the first; and the fourth transgression shall likewise be multiplied by seven: so that the same apostasy or rebellion, not amended after so many warnings, (if we may call the literal meaning to strict arithmetical account,) shall in the end be one thousand one hundred and ninety-seven times more severely punished than the first.

But it is likely that a certain number was put for an uncertain.

That the visitation of sins of fathers upon their children may be continued seventy generations, even from the first giving of the law by Moses unto the world's end, is apparent from the verses following, Levit. xxvi. 37. unto this: *Yet will the Lord still remember the covenant made with Abraham,* &c.

For not putting this rule or law, of confessing their fathers' sins, in practice, the children of that generation which put our Lord and Saviour to death are punished this day with greater hardness of heart than the scribes and Pharisees were: for however they were the very patterns of hypocrisy, yet had they so much sense or feeling of conscience, that they did utterly dislike their forefathers' actions, and thought to supererogate for their fathers' transgressions by erecting the tombs or garnishing the sepulchres of the prophets whom their fathers had murdered or stoned to death. But these modern scattered Jews will not to this day confess their forefathers' sins, nor acknowledge that they did aught amiss, in putting to death the Prince of prophets and Lord of life. And their fathers' sins, until they confess them, are become their sins, and shall be visited upon them.

To confess the sins of their fathers, according to the intendment or purpose of God's law, implies an hearty repentance for them, and repentance truly hearty implies, not only an abstinence from the same or like transgressions, wherewith their fathers had provoked God's wrath, but a zealous desire or endeavour to glorify God by constant practice of the contrary virtues, or works of piety. This doctrinal conclusion may easily be inferred from the aforecited 18th of Ezekiel. 756

How children are bound to repent of fathers' sins; see this author's second sermon on Jer. xxvi. [vol. vi. p. 70, &c.]

7. Sin is more catching than the pestilence; and no

marvel if the plagues due for it to the father, in the course or doom of justice, seize on the son, seeing the contagion of sin spreads from the unknown malefactor to his neighbours; from the fields, wherein it is by passengers committed, into the bordering cities or villages; unless the atonement be made by sacrifice and such solemn deprecation of guilt as the law in this case appoints, Deut. xxi. 1, 2, &c.: *If one be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him: then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain: and it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke; and the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley: and the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried: and all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley: and they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them. So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord.* The nearer unto us actual

transgressors be, the more they should provoke our zealous endeavours for performance of contrary duties, otherwise God's justice will in time oversway his mercy; and plagues first procured by some one or few men's sins, will diffuse themselves from the actual transgressors deceased unto the whole living host, and be propagated from posterity to posterity, though no personal actors. It is matter of death to be mere spectators or idle by-standers, where all are bound to take their censers and make atonement.

8. But I have gone far enough in this narrow passage for clearing the difficulties which concern the doctrinal part of my text; so far that we may, without the help of perspective or spectacles, discover the point where it opens itself into a wide sea or ocean of useful applications for all times, places, and persons, especially for such as sit at the stern, or are any way interested in the government of the great ship of state. But the time will not serve me, or if it did, I never had list to become the statesman's remembrancer out of the academical pulpit, nor to exhort or reprove academics in the court or presence of statesmen.

A short application.

The residue of my message for this present is to you, (men, fathers, and brethren,) to you especially unto whom the Lord hath delegated the government or oversight of others, (including myself in the number.) My message shall be very brief, only this; That we never seek to maintain either the dignity of our places, or means of private gain or advantages, by the examples or practices of our forefathers or predecessors: for this would be the most compendious way by which the old wily serpent could either lead or drive us to make up the measure of our forefathers' or predecessors' sins. As common charity binds us to hope the best of their estate or persons, and not to speak the worst of their

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proceedings; so true charity towards our own souls permits us to suppose, that many things have been done so far amiss by them, as by the forecited laws of God will bind us, whilst we beseech him to forgive us our own sins, so to forgive us also the sins of our forefathers or predecessors; that if they have oppressed any by fraud or violence, or by unconscionable using advantages of human laws, that he would give us grace *to deal our bread unto the hungry, to cover the naked with a garment;* that if they have dishonoured God's name by intemperance or other impure manner of living, he would grant the assistance of his grace unto our endeavours for glorifying his name by sanctity of life in his sight, and by integrity of conversation amongst men; that if they have offended him by superstition, by false doctrine or heresy, he would so bless our ministerial function, or other endeavours in our several callings, that we may lead others in the ways of truth, from which they have erred or caused others to err.

To the courteous Reader; an Advertisement of the Publishers [of the folio edition].

THIS great author, as may be seen above, [p. 279 &c.] had raised six questions out of the text; and in the two last past sermons (or chapters) had spoken to four (the first four) of those six questions.

To the sixth or last of them, he intended not to say any thing there, because he had spoken thereto in divers places of his writings, and namely in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of the seventh book [c], and in his first sermon upon 2 Chron. vi. 39 [d].

But he hath neither as yet here (I mean in the two last sermons) nor elsewhere, that I can refer the reader to, spoken

[c] [Vol. vii. p. 76 &c.] [d] [Vol. vi. p. 5 &c.]

any thing concerning the fifth question; which is one reason why I subjoin the ensuing fragment or appendix, having something in it relating to that. And (that I may give the reader a punctual account of every particular) it comes to be as a fragment or appendix thus: the author had written a very large tractate upon Matt. xxiii. 34, &c.; out of this tractate, upon occasion, himself had excerpt the two next foreprinted sermons, leaving out such things as I esteem (so will the reader I hope) very worthy to be inserted. And I choose rather to prejudice the author by publishing them in this way, than by stifling them to deprive the reader of the benefit and delight of them. In sum, what follows in this appendix may by easy observation be referred either,

1. To our author's opinion declared in answering the third question, (which, I confess, was new to me, and may perhaps seem to others a paradox,) viz. that our Saviour's transcendent goodness so interposed, that his own and his apostles' blood was not required of them that shed it.

Or, 2. to the fourth question, How fathers' sins are visited upon the children?

Or to the fifth question, Is it lawful for any of Christ's fol- 758
lowers in Zacharias' case to use the like imprecation, *Lord, look upon it, and require it?*

Or, lastly, to the sixth question, With what intent God sent prophets, &c.? which is proved to be out of mercy, and to recall them from sin, by two very apposite texts: the one, 2 Chron. xxiv. 19; the other, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15.

An Appendix to the two next precedent Sermons.

1. WE do not—God forbid we should—deny this last generation's personal offences against our Saviour to have been most heinous, most meritorious of exemplary punishment in this life[e]. But I know not how

[e] This refers to the third question propounded above [p. 280], handled [p. 289.]

it comes to pass, that many Christian writers, partly by measuring the grievousness of the Jews' offences amiss, partly by deriving their plagues from a wrong root, do nurse such security in their hearers as was in these Jews, and occasion them to make up the measure of these later Jews' sins, as they did the measure of their forefathers.

In civil justice, we know the same abuse is much greater, and more grievously punished, whilst offered to an officer, though but a petty constable, than to a mere private man; greater to a justice of peace, than to a constable, though greater to a justice of assize, than to an ordinary justice; but greatest of all unto the prince himself. Thus we imagine the punishment inflicted upon those Jews for their offences against our Saviour to have been so much more grievous than any punishment for the same offence against the prophets, or any temporal prince, as Christ was greater and better than the prophets or earthly princes.

In this short collection, notwithstanding, there be three gross inconsequences:

First, admitting that every degree of dignity in the party offended (as much as can be demanded) brings forth a correspondent degree of excess in the offence, supposing the matter of the offence to be (*quoad cætera*) equal; yet what proportion one degree hath to another, or unto what height any personal offence, though against our Saviour himself, could by this reckoning amount, is only possible for infinite Wisdom to determine.

Secondly, admitting every personal offence against Christ to be infinite in all such as believe him to be truly God, yet the Jews' case may differ, because they took him to be but man.

Thirdly, admitting their personal offences against him to have been the most grievous sins that ever were or could be committed, this will not infer the conclusion intended by Maldonate and others, that the plagues here threatened by our Saviour must wholly be ascribed to the murdering of him and his apostles, without any reference to the slaughter of God's prophets.

The infiniteness of the person offended makes up but one, and not the greatest, dimension in the body of sin[f]; the solidity or heinousness of it must be derived from another root. And though it be most true, that every sin is an offence against an infinite Majesty; yet is he, whose Majesty is infinite, in a manner infinitely more offended with some sins than with others.

2. Ignorance of those great mysteries (which we 759
believe and acknowledge) did somewhat mitigate the Jews' offences, as personal against our Saviour, and excuse their persons *a tanto*, though not *a toto*. *We speak the wisdom of God——which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, thy would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8[g]. And again, *They that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.* Acts xiii. 27. St. Peter hath avouched as much upon his own knowledge as St. Paul did in mitigation of these Jews' offence: *And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers,* Acts iii. 17. Some rigid accuser of these hateful men would perhaps reply that they were ignorant through their own default. All this being granted,

[f] See vol. x. p. 69 &c. [g] Luke xxiii. 34: *They know not what they do.*

their fault lies properly in the true and immediate cause of their ignorance, not in that ignorance which was no otherwise cause of their actual murder, than by not restraining their malice, which first brought forth ignorance, and then murder. What then were the true and proper causes of their malicious ignorance? Self-conceit of their own righteousness, pride, ambition, covetousness; unto all which, as also to their obdurateness in all these and like enormities, such partial apprehensions of their fathers' idolatry and cruelty in killing the prophets, as we have of their hypocrisy and cruelty against Christ, did concur as accessory, or causes collateral. Being so much addicted to covetousness, to pride and ambition, and so self-conceited of their own righteousness in respect of other men, it was impossible they should not do as they did. These collections, to my apprehension, are the same with that of our Saviour; *He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is* their *condemnation.* What? That they went about to kill Christ? No; but *that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.* But why did they so? *Because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light.* He that now is otherwise as evil as they were before Christ came, would have hated him and his disciples as much as they did, and is as liable as they were to any punishment which they suffered for their trespasses against him. Suppose he had come into the world in the days of Joash, who put Zachariah to death, done the same works, used the same admonitions and reproofs to have recalled that headstrong generation from idolatry, which he did to reclaim the scribes and Pharisees from their

hypocrisy and malice; God's prophets, which knew their temper, would not (I am persuaded) have been too forward to have been their bails for much better behaviour towards their Lord and Master, than they had shewed towards themselves his servants. St. Stephen's censure of this people from time to time—*Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye*—gives us occasion to suspect that they were sometimes afore Christ's time so wicked, as if he had come in their days they would have done as this later generation did. But these have killed him *de facto;* their sin, notwithstanding, is not hereby greater than theirs that would have been as forward to kill him, if he had given them the like provocation. For so his manifestation in the flesh should necessarily have made this later generation worse than any former had been, and God had dealt less graciously with them in presenting his Son unto them, than with their wicked fathers which never had seen him. But against these and the like necessary consequences of the former position our Saviour protests; *God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved,* John iii. 17. And this salvation was first (out of love no doubt) to be tendered unto Jerusalem and her children.

Doth God punish men for what they would have done in such and such cases? query.

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3. The issue of these deductions in brief is this:—the scribes and Pharisees did no way exceed their fathers in wickedness, unless perhaps in hypocrisy, or unwillingness to be reclaimed. Christ was a better teacher than the prophets were; and unto us it is manifest that these scribes and Pharisees, which would not learn goodness of him, were most wickedly wilful; but whether more wicked or wilful than any of their fathers before, or others that lived since that time have been, is more than man can determine. It must

be left to his judgment, which judgeth not as man doth, by the event, but by clear sight of the heart. For the same reason it cannot be resolved whether they that put our Saviour to death were greater sinners than king Joash and his princes; only this we know and must believe, that these later did fill up the measure of their forefathers' iniquity; that the complement of their iniquity being come, the vials of God's wrath were poured more plentifully upon this last generation than upon any former, but should not have been so plentifully poured upon it, unless Zacharias and the prophets had been so desperately slain by their fathers. And for any argument that can be brought to the contrary, had Christ been crucified when Zacharias was slain, and Zacharias slain when he was crucified, (all other proper circumstances of each fact, besides this change of time, continuing the same,) it is probable, from my text, that God's judgments upon this nation had been less in the former age than they were, and more grievous, more sudden and terrible in the latter, than are now recorded. Nor can this consequence be any whit prejudiced, albeit we grant the practices of cruelty against our Saviour to have been seven hundred thousand times more heinous in themselves than any could have been attempted against Zacharias.

The destruction of our Saviour's enemies, upon the first arrest or shameless abuse of his sacred body, in justice might, and without his intercession perhaps would have been more sudden and dreadful than Sodom was. Obdurate pride, unrelenting cruelty, and general impenitency for other foul sins, as they concerned the whole Trinity, or were matter of sin against the Holy Ghost, he could not remit or make intercession for them in the days of his flesh, but is to

According to this opinion, Matt. xii. 32. may have a very commodious interpretation.

call their authors to strict account, as he is the Judge of quick and dead; but he that by virtue of his commission, as Son of man, did freely forgive all other sins, did (as my text imports) remit all personal offences, as they only concerned himself, and did not suffer the fruits or effects of these later Jews' malice to come upon Jerusalem's score for shedding of righteous blood. It was not his will to have any more grievously punished for being maliciously bent against him, than they should otherwise have been for the unrelenting habitual bent of their malice against whomsoever it had been set. Never was bitter enmity practised against any so little desirous of revenge, or so unwilling to accuse his enemies, as he was; for so he protests unto the Jews which sought his life: *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.* John v. 45. Moses, though (till Christ came) the meekest man that had been on earth, had foretold and solemnly threatened those plagues, whose execution most of the prophets had solicited. But this great Prophet, beyond all measure of meekness and patience whereof humanity—so but mere humanity—is capable, seeks by prayer, by reproof, by admonitions and exhortations, by all means justly possible to prevent them: he often forewarns what would be the issue of their stubbornness, which he never mentions but with 761
grief and sorrow of heart; he often intimates, that the most malicious murderer amongst this people was not so desirous of his death, as he was of all their lives; witness his affectionate prayers, seasoned with sighs and tears, even whiles they plotted the execution of their long intended mischief against him.

4. That which first moved me to make, and must justify the interpretation of these words here made, is

a remarkable opposition expressly recorded in scripture betwixt our Saviour's and his disciples' desires uttered at their death for this people's good, and the cry of Abel's blood and Zachariah's dying voice, both soliciting vengeance from heaven against their persecutors: *When they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him——Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* Luke xxiii. 33, 34. This infinite charity, notwithstanding, some (always jealous, lest God should shew any token of love towards such as they mislike, or Christ manifest any desire of their salvation whom they have marked for reprobates) would have restrained unto the garrison of soldiers that conducted him to the cross. But reasons we have many to think, or rather firmly to believe, that he uttered those prayers indefinitely for all that either were actors in this business, or approvers of it, whether Jews or Gentiles; and if both his doctrines and miracles whiles he lived on earth (as all must acknowledge) did, why should not his dying prayers in the first place respect the lost sheep of Israel? Roman soldiers they were not, but Jews of the most malignant stamp, which martyred St. Stephen; yet, after he had commended his spirit unto Jesus in near the same terms that Jesus did his unto his Father, *he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.* Acts vii. 60. It is no sin, I hope, to suppose that the Master was every way as charitable at his death as his disciple. It is requisite that he which bids us bless our persecutors, should set us a more exquisite pattern than we are able to express; his prayers for his greatest persecutors were more fervent and unfeigned than ours can be for our dearest friends. St. Stephen in

thus praying for his enemies did but imitate his Master, and bear witness of his lovingkindness towards all. But when Cain had killed Abel, the voice of *his blood cried unto the Lord from the earth;* and the cry procured a curse upon him; for the earth became barren unto him, and he was a fugitive and vagabond from the land wherein he lived before: herein (as St. Augustine excellently observes) a type of the Jewish nation, who, having the prerogative of birthright amongst God's people, for the like sin became fugitives and vagabonds on the face of the earth, whilst the good land which God gave unto their fathers had been cursed with barrenness and desolation for their sakes. And this cry of Abel's blood against his brother, God would have registered in the beginning of his book, as a proclamation against all like impious and bloody conspiracies until the world's end; whereby the Jews, to whom the manner of God's process with Cain was sufficiently known, were condemned *ipso facto,* without any further solicitation of God's judgments than their own attempts of like practices. No marvel if his punishment foreshadow theirs, whenas never any did so manifestly and notoriously revive his sin as this generation here spoken of did. *Cain,* (saith St. John,) *who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.* 1 John iii. 12. *Ye are of your father the devil,* (saith our Saviour to these Jews,) *and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning.* John viii. 44.

And why did they go about to murder him? 762

Because he had told them the truth which he had heard of God, ver. 40. And as he had taught before in the third chapter of St. John, they would not receive

him, although *he came as a light into the world, because their deeds were evil.*

Moses had foretold that the great Prophet was to be this people's brother; and in that they would not hearken to him they stood condemned by Moses' sentence, Deut. xviii. 18: *Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him*, ver. 19.

Abel, as pleasing God by his sacrifice, and as being slain by his ungracious brother, was the live type of Christ, as man, whose murder by his brethren, though most displeasant, yet his sacrifice was most acceptable unto his God. The same God which in the fourth of Genesis admonisheth Cain, partly by threatening, partly by promises, to desist from his wicked purposes, doth here in my text as lovingly, and yet as severely, dehort these Jews from following his footsteps, lest his punishments fall heavier upon them; and they not taking warning by Cain's example, (to repent them of their envy and grudging against their brother,) the cry, not of Christ's blood, which they shed, but of Abel's, overtakes them; for Christ was consecrated as the sanctuary, or place of refuge, whereto they should have fled; and Abel was the revenger of blood, which did pursue them. So likewise doth the cry of Zacharias's at his death; (for that was quite contrary to our Saviour's and St. Stephen's;) *When he died, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it.* 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. The present effect of this his dying speech, compared with St. Luke's narration of our Saviour's admonition, affords the true comment on my text: *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the*

foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation. Luke xi. 49, 50, 51. The emphatical resuming of the terms which Zacharias used, *It shall be required of this generation*, implies as much as if our Saviour had said—The day of vengeance and execution, which Zacharias solicited against your fathers for their apostasy from God, and their cruelty towards him, is yet to come. His innocent blood, which was in part required of that wicked king and the princes which shed it, shall be required in fuller measure of this generation, which is more bloodily minded than that was, and herein worse than all the former, in that it will not take warning either by Cain's punishment, or the calamities which befell this people for their cruelty towards Zacharias and other prophets; *for the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the Lord delivered a very great host into their hands, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash——they left him in great diseases; his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him.* 2 Chron. xxiv. 24, 25.

5. Yet some there be which question, whether Zacharias did not use these words only by way of prophecy, fearing belike lest his using of them by way of curse or imprecation might argue he died not in perfect charity. But seeing he was a prophet, he might foresee many reasons, unknown to us, not to pray for them, but against them. Or if out of the bitterness of his soul, or indignation at this graceless king's ingratitude, he did thus pray against him and his people, This relates to the fifth question.

we may not condemn him of sin, although it would be
763 a damnable sin in us to imitate him in like cases; nor is it necessary we should think he did wish their eternal destruction, but only indefinitely desire that God would not suffer such an execrable conspiracy to go unpunished, lest others should be emboldened to do the like. And though we know not upon what motives or warrants all other prophets of God, or types of Christ, in their perplexity and distress so zealously pray for vengeance against their malicious persecutors; yet we should know one true use or end of these their usual practices to be this, that the world might note the difference between them and the promised Messias; who, though he had suffered greater indignities, more open shame, and more grievous vexations at this people's hands, than all his forerunners had done, yet never complains, never prays against them, but for them, even whiles they crucify him. This his peculiar character argues he came into the world, *not to condemn, but to save it.* And when his disciples desire him to call down fire from heaven, as Elias did, he derives his sharp check from this principle, which they should have known; *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* Luke ix. 55, 56. Did then Elias, or Elisha his scholar, sin in taking vengeance upon the enemies of their God? Who dare avouch it? Or if to execute vengeance were lawful to them, as they were prophets, was it unlawful for Zacharias upon greater personal indignities to desire the Lord would revenge his death? Yet Christ's disciples might not do so, because they were to be of another spirit, as having a better example set by their Master at his death.

This relates to the third question.

6. But whence is it that Zacharias' curse should

take better effect against this generation, which had never offended him, never known him, than our Saviour's prayers poured out for their safety, whiles he offered himself in sacrifice? Was it possible Zacharias' spirit of cursing and indignation should be stronger, so long after his death, than the spirit of prayer and blessing was in the Redeemer of Israel's living mouth? God forbid! Rather this generation, by reviving their forefathers' sins, awaked God's justice to renew their plagues; and by their impenitency made themselves uncapable of that general pardon which Christ had procured for all that be penitent, or would rightly use it; but neither did he pray that their stubbornness might be pardoned, nor did Zacharias' curse make them stubborn: their impenitency is from themselves; and whiles they continue stubborn and impenitent they can have no allowance of that general pardon, which they will not plead or stand to, as standing too much upon their own integrity. Since Christ's death, they have been perpetually punished for their impenitency, yet not punished with perpetual impenitency for putting him to death.

But take we them as they are in their impenitency, may we think they were thus grievously punished for shedding his blood, or for the blood of Abel, Zacharias, and other prophets, unjustly shed by their forefathers? for their personal hatred against him as the Son of God; or for their habitual hatred and opposition unto that truth which made his person and presence, as it had done all the prophets before him, so hateful unto them?

They were plagued questionless for that blood which was required of them; and that was Zacharias' and Abel's blood, not Christ's. After the citation of Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. and multiplication of the plagues by

7. That this multiplication of punishment cannot

seven, this followed, relating to the fourth question.

be meant only of the same persons multiplying the same or the like offences, but withal of different ages or successions, is apparent, partly because it is spoken generally of the whole state or nation; partly from the different specifical quality, or extent of the plagues
764 here mentioned, often inflicted on several generations of the Israelites; but specially from the tenor and purpose of the law itself, strictly enjoining the scattered relics of this people, after execution of the last plague, to confess the iniquity of their fathers, as an especial duty to be performed on their parts, and as a necessary mean in God's ordination for their absolution or deliverance. And if without confession of their fathers' iniquity they cannot be absolved from their own, their fathers' iniquity not repented of was their own; so was the punishment due unto it. The consequence is evident to reason, but more evident from the express words of the text, Levit. xxvi. 38—42: *Ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them. If they shall* (then) *confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.*

God's covenant is with his people (whether Jews or

Gentiles) and their children jointly: every child is born, as it were, heir to his father's sins and their plagues, unless he renounce them by taking their guilt upon him in such hearty confession as this law prescribes, and patient submission of himself to God's correction. To satisfy God's justice for the least trespass committed by our ancestors is impossible; but to avert their just punishment from ourselves, by unfeigned conversion unto God in those particulars wherein our fathers have forsaken him, is a duty possible, because necessary to every faithful soul. As if the father have been an unconscionable gatherer or cruel oppressor, the son is more strictly bound, than otherwise he were, to abound in works of mercy towards the poor; to give liberally to such as need; to lend freely to such as desire rather their kindness than mere alms. If the father have been a blasphemer, or grievous swearer, the son must consecrate his tongue to God, and use no speech, but such as may *minister grace unto the hearers*. Briefly, posterity (besides performance of duties common to all) must always be zealous observers of those precepts which their forefathers have principally transgressed. The truth of this inference is warranted by that very text of scripture, entirely considered, whose first passages are by worldlings brought against it. What more common shelter for security in this kind than the prophet's speech—*The soul that sinneth, it shall die*. Ezek. xviii. 4? But every soul that sees his father's sins, and sorrows not for them, sins them over again. And now, *Lo*, (saith the prophet,) *if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like——Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence;* shall he, by not doing all, or any of

these, escape God's wrath kindled against his father? No; performance of negatives makes no man just: if doing none of these, he *hath given his bread to the hungry*, (whom his father deprived of food,) *and hath covered the naked* (whom his father spoiled) *with a garment*, and *hath taken off his hand from the poor*, (on whom his father's hand was heavy,) if he *hath not received usury nor increase*, but *hath executed my judgments, and hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father*, (saith the Lord,) *he shall surely live*. Ezek. xviii. 14, &c.

765 From these laws thus expounded, specially from that of *God's visiting the sins of fathers upon their children unto the third and fourth generation*, the reason is plain why some royal or noble families have had their fatal periods in the days of such, as, to the sight of men, were no way so heinous offenders as their foreelders had been[h]. With instances to this purpose, you that can read may furnish yourselves out of histories sacred and moral, domestic and foreign. Every one of you may without reading observe, that many extortioners or cruel oppressors' children come ofttimes to greater misery than their fathers in this life suffered, albeit they did not so well deserve it in your judgments. But if positive or actual transgressions, otherwise equal, be liable, by the rule of divine justice, to more than double punishment in the son, that hath had fair warnings in his father; it is very consonant to the same rule, that the son, albeit he do not imitate his forefathers in actual transgressions, should suffer greater temporal punishments than they did, *for not confessing their sins*, as God's law requires; or not glorifying God's name by his fidelity in

[h] See one example in the next Sermon.

contrary practices of charity and godliness. Many children, by not making restitution of goods ill gotten by some of their ancestors, have forfeited unto God's hands whatsoever all had gotten. The best way for all to make kingdoms or private inheritances greater in length or duration, would be to diminish them in mass or substance, by paring off what is tainted or corrupted.

But leaving these particulars to the application, let us apply the doctrine hitherto generally delivered unto the point in question. We must consider that the Jewish nation had many forewarnings of God's displeasure in the ages before Zacharias; that in his time, both prince and people, the whole nation stood as condemned by that his sentence solemnly pronounced *ex cathedra; Ye shall not prosper; ye have forsaken the Lord, and the Lord hath forsaken you*; though God, tempering his judgments with mercy, reprieved this state in hope of amendment. But of succeeding princes some proved more gross idolaters than Joash had been; viz. Ahaz: some shed more innocent blood than he had done; so did Manasses. And of the people, more grew worse, few better, than their fathers had been; such as were better were not so forward to expiate the sins of former times, as the worse sort were to augment them. And according as they were augmented, God's judgments did gather and multiply by degrees against this people; and the sentence solemnly denounced by Zacharias, often reiterated in more severe terms by later prophets, is executed at length according to the full measure of their iniquity; witness the first and second destruction of the city and temple, the desolation of the land, and captivity of the whole nation. The whole manner of God's proceeding against them, first in mercy, then in judgment, lastly

in severity and fury, is most directly set forth unto us by our Saviour in the parable of the vineyard *let out to husbandmen*, whose estate in it was utterly void upon the first nonpayment of rent, if the Lord had dealt in justice with them. But though of his servants or rent-gatherers they had beaten one and killed another, and stoned a third; yet, in merciful expectation of their amendment, he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did unto them likewise.

Though this iniquity exceeded the former, yet the Lord's mercy exceeded both; and out of his abundant kindness, *last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.* But as mercy had abounded, so their sins did still superabound: for
766 when they *saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.* And as they said, so they did; *they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.* So fully ripe for justice was iniquity once come to this height, that they themselves, whom this case concerns, adjudge the authors of this murder uncapable of mercy. For to our Saviour demanding of them, *When therefore the lord of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?* they make reply, *He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their season.* Matt. xxi. Luke xx.

Most men (I doubt not) understand the general meaning of the parable. And it is in effect the same with the prophet's song of his beloved concerning his vineyard, Isaiah v. 1. The one is as a paraphrase upon the other; the histories of this nation from that time to this is as a full and just commentary upon both: *The vineyard of the Lord of hosts* (saith the

prophet, ver. 7.) *is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant;* and being reasonable plants, they were also the husbandmen here meant[1]. The fruits looked for were *judgment*, and instead of it, *behold oppression; righteousness*, and in lieu hereof, *behold a cry.* These were wild grapes. If any list to descend to more particulars, by *the fruitful hill*, wherein the vineyard was seated, he may understand the hill of Sion, or Jerusalem; by *the tower*, the temple; by the *hedge*, the fortifications of Jerusalem, begun by David, without which our Saviour (who is the heir meant in the gospel) was crucified, being sentenced to execution within the vineyard. The judgment, which the chief priest and elders gave against themselves, was by the prophet referred unto the inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah. The tenor of it is the same in the prophet and the evangelist: *I will tell you* (saith the prophet) *what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: and I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it;* that is, not whiles it remained in Judah, whose mountains are now become like the mountains of Gilboa, accursed for the slaughter of the king of Israel.

The execution of this sentence was fitted to divers times in different measure, according to their unfruitfulness, or fertility in bringing forth wild grapes when good grapes were most expected.

Judah's climacterical seasons.

More exactly parallel to the parable, as it is proposed by our Saviour, we may (besides all other particular diseases or distempers of this flourishing state)

[1] See St. Chrysostom upon the fifth of Isaiah.

observe three principal climacterical seasons. In the first and second it escapes very hardly, and dies in the last.

1. At the death of Zachariah.

The first we take from Zacharias' death; a season wherein God (the men of Judah being judges) might justly expect extraordinary fruit of his vineyard. For Jehoiada the high priest, father to Zacharias, had lately pruned and dressed it, reingrafting Joash, as a forlorn plant, into the stock of David, from which he had been for a while displanted by Athaliah the queen regent, through whose cruelty all the rest of the royal branches utterly perished; but instead of grapes, the princes bring forth wild grapes: *After the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass. Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord; and they testified against them:* 767 *but they would not give ear. And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah .... and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper?* 2 Chron. xxiv. 17, 19, 20. He said no more than Moses their lawgiver had expressed in that divine song, Deut. xxxii, which this people were to teach their children, that it might be a witness against them. Notwithstanding, in despite of Moses' law, and the Spirit of the Lord, which emboldened Zachariah to preach it, they confirm their desperate league with the prophet's blood that did dissuade it.

Of those other servants of the Lord, sent unto them about the same time, we may without breach of charity suspect one at least was beaten, and another slain;

because it is certain that Zachariah, whose father had deserved so well of king, princes, and people of Judah, was by the king's appointment stoned to death. And (besides the calamities of war, which befell the land in the end of that year) the temple, in which he died, was by his dying curse designed to ruin and destruction. It could not be purged from guilt of his guiltless blood, but by that fire which in the next generation did devour it.

Second climacterical of Judah at the carrying into Babylon.

Yet before the approach of this second climacterical season, *the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16.

This refers to the sixth question.

8. This affectionate description of God's tender care and compassion in sending prophets to reclaim them, argues (what our Saviour expresseth in the parable) that he sent more than before. And in the age following Zachariah's death lived all the prophets, whose prophecies are extant; but unto all those (though more) they did as they had done unto the former. Isaiah (as the Jews confess) was slain by Manasses; Uriah (as you have heard before) was killed by Jehoiakim; and Jeremiah, sometimes beaten, sometimes imprisoned, perpetually abused, during the reign of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah; and so at length the plagues threatened, and in part executed upon this people immediately after Zachariah's death, are multiplied upon that wicked generation. The rod of God's wrath is for fashion the same, but now more sharp and terrible. Their fathers had slain Zachariah in the temple; and for this sin not expiated, but continued and approved,

at least by like practices of this generation, *the Lord brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17, 18. What are those but mere enlargements of the former calamities, which ensued the butchery of Zacharias? which were these: *It came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against Joash: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus,* ch. xxiv. 23. Some principal particulars of the spoils here intimated are fully expressed 2 Kings xii. 18, where the rest of this story is omitted: *And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things ..... and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem.*

768 But though the Chaldeans had burnt the house of God and the palaces of Jerusalem with fire, had destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof, yet the Lord doth not utterly forsake his vineyard; his church (the choir of saints) still nestles in the branches that are transplanted, whose offspring within seventy years is restored unto their native soil, Jerusalem repaired, the temple reedified, and the land of Judah sown with the seed of man and beast. After this state thus raised again from civil death, if posterity will not believe,

nor bring forth better fruits than heretofore their fathers have done, neither would they believe, though Moses and the prophets were raised from the dead to exhort them to repentance.

The third climacterical period of Judah at Christ's coming.

For this reason, after their return from Babylon, and reedification of the temple, God sends no more prophets (save such as they brought with them) until the fulness of time, or the third climacterical period of this state, wherein the disease being become more desperate, he sent *his only Son, the heir of all things*, as knowing, that if he could not, none ever after should be able to recover it. This his Son was that Lord, which, by his peculiar presence, had brought this vine out of Egypt, but (after he had planted it in Judæa, and let it out unto these husbandmen) went into a far country, that is, he appeared not unto them, as he did to Moses, to Joshua, &c., until in the last days he descended from heaven in the true form and substance of man to receive the fruits; he looked (at this time especially) his vineyard should have brought forth grapes, but it brought forth more wild grapes than before. He looked for weighty matters of the law, and behold tithing of mint, annise, and cummin: he looked for judgment, mercy, and faith; but behold, covetousness, extortion, pride, and cruelty; grapes more bitter than the grapes of Sodom, sourness itself, the very leaven of hypocrisy: yet upon the first denial of such fruits as he expected, he departs not from them, he accuseth them not unto his Father; but (as they had two or three forewarnings more remarkable than ordinary in several generations of their ancestors, so) he expects a loyal answer at more times of fruit than one or two, presenting himself to them for three years and more together at every several passover, besides other anniversary solemnities. And yet at

last, for constant delivery of that embassage which he had from his Father, they caught him, and condemned him in the vineyard, but carry him out of it to be crucified in mount Calvary. And thus at length Zachariah's prophecy against Joash and his wicked princes, and his imprecation at his death, are fulfilled in this wicked generation; they formally forsook their God when they cried, *We have no king but Cæsar!* and demanding Barabbas, a murderer, (the son of their father the devil,) they destroyed Jesus the Son of God. And the Lord hath utterly forsaken them, not the temple and city only, but the inhabitants, but the whole race of the Jewish nation, and hath let forth his vineyard to us Gentiles. They were grown so rich by his bounty, that they were ashamed to acknowledge so mean a man as our Saviour for their Lord, and owner of the land they inhabited. And as the prophet foretold, *they hid their faces from him;* and therefore, as Moses testified against them in his dying song, *the Lord hides his face from them.* Darkness did overspread the land of Judah at his passion, and the light of his countenance, since that time, hath never shined upon that nation. They lost God's extraordinary illumination by Urim and Thummim (as some hold) at Zachariah's death, (as most agree,) at the destruction of Solomon's temple; but now are des-
769 titute of the light of scripture, without all knowledge of God's word, since they rejected *him which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;* in the very sunshine of the gospel they grope like blind men, that cannot see a beaten way, and must so continue throughout their generations unto the world's end, until they shall unfeignedly *confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers .... and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have*

walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies, Lev. xxvi. 40.

As the sins of those Jews, which rejected the light of the world, and solemnly revolted from their king, have been thus remarkably visited upon their children that will not confess their sins in so doing, nor acknowledge him whom they rejected for their expected Redeemer; so were the sins of that generation which slew Zachariah visited upon this, which crucified our Saviour, because they neither did truly confess them, (but rather revive and increase them,) nor finally admit of his sacrifice, which was appointed for the expiation of that prodigious fact (as of all others) wherewith the city and temple had been polluted. Unless God's mercy had warded off the stroke of his justice, Jerusalem itself had been made an heap of stones, when king Joash stoned Zachariah to death; so had the temple itself, wherein his guiltless blood lay uncovered, been covered with dust. The whole nation's plagues, in rigour of justice, might have been much greater at that time than they have been since.

Now all the mercy or mitigation of justice, which former generations found, was through the mediation of the Son of God. And seeing these later have been more refractory to this their Mediator himself, than were their fathers to his prophets; seeing they have solemnly disavowed him, and bid a defiance to his ambassadors; God's mercies, which had daily shrowded Jerusalem from his wrath, as the hen doth her young ones from the storm, leave it and her children open to his justice.

For resolution of the main point or difficulty proposed. The forsaking, or putting the Son of God to death, is (for ought I can gather) no direct and positive cause of all the miseries expressed or intimated in

my text: only such a cause of Jerusalem's destruction, as the pilot's absence is of shipwreck; a cause of it only in this sense, that her inhabitants by forsaking him have exempted themselves from his wonted protection; and God's justice, which had long watched his departure from the city and temple, (as sergeants do their egress, which have taken sanctuary,) now attaches them, when there is none to become their surety, none to intercede for mitigation of justice, none to hinder, why judgments heretofore always abated, and ofttimes altogether deferred, may not be executed upon them in full measure. But that their personal offences against their Mediator should wholly or specially procure this woful doom, or come at all into the bill of their indictment, is (in my opinion) no way probable. The character of his own speeches, as well in my text or elsewhere, altogether disclaims this assertion, as unconsonant to the form of wholesome doctrine. But may we say, that albeit his blood did not augment their plagues that shed it, because never laid unto their charge, it may notwithstanding exempt them and their children from hope of mercy, or mitigation of punishments due unto them for other sins? Or that such as since his death have pined away in their own sins and the sins of their fathers, did therefore perish, because he had absolutely decreed not to save them, or grant them means of repentance? God forbid! This were more than to say *they stumbled that they should fall.* And inasmuch as the riches of
770 the world will be much greater by their fulness, than by their fall or diminution, the fault is ours as well as theirs, that their conversion is not accomplished; both we and they are liable to a strict account, that we would not be gathered when God would have gathered us.

CHAP. XLV.

2 KINGS XXIII. 26, 27.

Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal. And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.

1. THE points to be discussed are two:

First, how the Lord might justly punish Judah for Manasseh's sins, and sins committed in his time, in the days of good Josiah and his sons:

Secondly, in what manner God proceeded to execute this his fierce wrath denounced against Judah.

For your better satisfaction in the former point, you are to consider the nature and tenor of God's general covenant with this people. The miraculous blessings and extraordinary curses proposed unto the two several ways of life and death, which Moses first had set before this people, are sufficiently known, being most expressly set down, Levit. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii, throughout the whole chapters.

The like covenant was renewed with David's line, in the same tenor, Psalm lxxxix. 29, &c., *His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer*

[1] Though there be a sermon upon Matt. xxiii. 37, [below, p. 361.] yet I thought it best to intersert this here before it.

my faithfulness to fail; or, *neither will I falsify my truth.* This promise was absolute for Christ, conditional for the other sons of David; and consists not in their immunity from punishments, but in the assurance of their recovery upon their penitency.

The tenor of both covenants, then, in brief, was thus: following the footsteps of Abraham or David, they should be blessed extraordinarily: forsaking their ways, and following the customs of other nations, they should be punished more severely than other men; yet so, that if in their distress they did turn again unto the Lord, for Abraham's and for David's sake they should be restored to his wonted mercy and favour[m]. So saith the Lord, Levit. xxvi. 44, 45: *And yet for all that,* (he supposeth his plagues denounced had already overtaken them,) *when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God. But I will remember them according to the covenant of old;* or, *I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt.* And in the 42nd verse of the same chapter, (when they shall confess their iniquity before him in their distress,) he saith, he would remember his covenant with Jacob, and also his covenant with Isaac and with Abraham.

771 The same covenant is more solemnly established at the dedication of the temple, 2 Chron. vi. by Solomon. He supposed this people should be plagued for their sins, as others were: but yet if they turned to the Lord with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their captivity, the effect of his petition is, that the Lord's eyes should be open, and his ears

[m] Levit. xxvi; Deut. vii. 14, 28; Amos iii. 2.

attent unto the prayers which they made towards the temple which he had built. And in this sense is God said to *shew mercy unto thousands in such as love him and keep his commandments:* because, for Abraham and for David's sake, they still enjoyed the assurance of recovering their ruinate and decayed estate.

2. Yet here we are again to consider that the covenant was not made *in capita*, as if it were to begin entirely with every particular man; but rather with their whole successions in their several generations. They stood all jointly bound to obey the Lord their God; so as posterity must make up the arrearages of their fathers' riot, by their wary and diligent observance of those commandments which the other had broken. If the fathers had sinned by idolatry, the posterity must redeem their sins, or break them off, by preaching reformation of religion, and restoring the true worship of God again. If the fathers had caused God's wrath upon the land by oppression, extortion, and cruelty, the children must divert it by mercy, bounty, and openhandedness towards the poor; and by restitution of goods ill gotten by their fathers unto their proper owners; or by restoring goods rightly enjoyed, but employed amiss, unto their natural and right use. If the fathers have transgressed all or most of God's negative commandments, the children are bound to rectify their errors, by practising the affirmative duties of the law. In a word, as the fathers' offences have been greater, either in multitude, magnitude, or continuance, so must the virtues and piety of posterity abound in perfection of parts, intention of degrees, and duration of time. For although it be most true, that *the children's teeth are not set on edge for their fathers' eating sour grapes—but the*

soul that sinneth it shall die, Ezek. xviii. 2; yet is not this so to be understood, but that the son may be punished for those sins which his father only did actually commit, if so he seek not to rectify his errors, by inclining to the contrary duties; for not so doing, his father's sins are made his by participation, and the curse becomes hereditary; as he that helpeth not when he may, doth further or abet the evil done by others, and is thereby made accessary or partaker of other men's sins. So likewise are the children guilty of their fathers' transgressions, and liable to God's wrath caused by them, if they seek not to rectify the same by their zealous prayers, speedy repentance, and unfeigned turning to the Lord. So is it said, Ezek. xviii. 14, the *son that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like*, but rather, if the father have cruelly oppressed and spoiled his brother by violence, he feeds the hungry, and clothes the naked, and keeps all God's statutes, he shall live. Hence it is that this people of God in their distress make the confession of their forefathers' sins as essential an ingredient (or condition) of their prayers, as the confession of their own, Dan. ix. Ezra ix. Nehem. ix. Psalm cvi. 6, 7; for this the Lord himself had expressly taught them, Levit. xxvi. 38, &c. *For your transgressions the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them. If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers*—thus doing, *I will* 772 *remember* (saith the Lord) *my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.* You see then it is evident, that

Confession of forefathers' sins a necessary ingredient of repentance.

as Adam's sin remains in his posterity until it be taken away in Christ; so doth God's wrath abide upon a land for the former inhabitants' sins, and passeth from the dead unto the living, unless the atonement be made by the sweet incense of prayer and fervency of spirit, which is to be in every Christian and spiritual priest's heart as ready upon this occasion, as fire from the altar was in Aaron's hand when he stayed the plague by standing betwixt the dead and them that were alive, Numb. xvi. 46. It is not the sacrifice, though of the calves of men's lips, without an humbled and contrite spirit, and fervent zeal of blessing God's name by contrary good deeds, that can stay the plague and divert the wrath gone out from God against a land for her former inhabitants their predecessors' sins.

3. From these principles we may easily gather how God's mercies may be abridged towards a land or people less sinful perhaps than others formerly have been for actual transgressions, if we consider the sins only of the present time. From the same principles we may likewise clearly discern how the full measure of any land's or people's iniquity may be accomplished then, when to men's seeming their outrages be nothing so grievous as others before them have been, or when their princes or rulers are more than ordinarily religious.

Reasons why a people less actually sinful is more plagued.

First, where the transgressions of predecessors have been many and grievous, and the reformation of their successors but slight or imperfect; the wrath of God procured by the former may remain still, and light heaviest upon the third generation following, who shall procure it further, if they follow their grandsires' sins, notwithstanding their immediate parents or predecessors did in part repent, or in some sort renounce

their fathers' ways. For the fruits of such repentance, seeing it is not total, and proceeds not from a perfect and unfeigned heart, do but as it were for a time put off the fit or extremity of God's wrath; they take not away the disease itself, which therefore returns to its course again: as the Psalmist excellently describes the effects of such repentance: *When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.* But *their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant*[n]. The fruit of this was, that ofttimes he called back his anger, and *would not suffer his whole displeasure to arise:* this stayed the course or motion of his wrath; it did not minish the inclination or propension of the same; but when the former sins burst out again, either in them or their posterity, his judgments drew nearer unto them than before, and his vengeance was more fierce and sudden.

Secondly, where the reformation of religion and turning unto the Lord is on the princes' parts perfect and complete, yet the people do not inwardly repent, and with a perfect heart abjure their forefathers' ways, the wrath of God due unto their fathers' sins comes upon them, and is executed by taking away their good, and giving them princes alike minded to themselves; and so by little and little they fulfil the iniquity of their forefathers.

A view of the kingdom of Judah throughout. David: Solomon:

4. To give you a view of these general undoubted truths in the succession of this kingdom: righteous David had left God's mercy towards this land and people so far overbalancing his justice, that all the idolatry which Solomon his son had set up (albeit
773 idolatry be a most grievous sin) did not any more

[n] Psalm lxxviii. 34.

than bring his mercy to an equipoise with it again. But Rehoboam, following his father's footsteps in evil, Rehoboam: not his religious grandfather's paths in good, pulls down God's judgments upon his head, and first bears the rod of his transgression, having more than one half of his kingdom rent from him by his servant Jeroboam, and afterwards both he and Judah, which had remained with him, bear the strokes of their iniquity by the hand of Shishak king of Egypt, who foraged the land, and took away the treasures of the temple of the Lord[o]. But in this God did but shake his sword over their heads; these beginnings of plagues and judgments are but the motions of his wrath, which abides not; for his mercy presently retired unto the same point where it stood at Jeroboam's revolt. Of an unwise father there sprung up immediately an unrighteous son, Abijam, who though he had sometimes Abijam: good success against his enemies, yet, as the sequel of this story intimates, 1 Kings xv. 3, he had almost brought God's fierce wrath upon the land by following his father's footsteps, but that the Lord as yet drew back his punishing hand, for righteous David his great-grandfather's sake: *For David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem*, ver. 4. This was Asa, in whose days the land had peace; Asa: for he followed the footsteps of his father David; yet was there no perfect reformation wrought in his reign, for the high places were not taken away; and he himself, after good success in victory, was infected with the fatal disease of kings and princes[p], to begin to trust

[o] 1 Kings xiv. 25.

[p] Vide Ecclus. xlix. 4. All, except David, Hezekias, and Josias, committed wickedness; for even the kings of Judah forsook the law of the Most High, and failed.

too much to secular policy, and grew impatient of the Lord's prophets' reproof. But by his carriage and good example, such as it is, and the righteous reign of his son Jehoshaphat, is the current of the Lord's former wrath stopped; yet so as it is ready to overflow the land with greater violence in the next succession, wherein the like iniquity as had reigned in former times should burst out afresh again. Although Jehoshaphat's heart was upright, yet did he work no perfect reformation; for the high places were not taken away: and as it is 2 Chron. xx. 33, *the people had not yet prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers:* neither so penitent as that they could recall God's wrath, or bring his mercy back again unto its former stay; nor yet so extreme bad and forward in sin, as that the Lord would not spare the land, and be merciful to them, for religious Jehoshaphat and the righteous' sakes that lived in it. After Jehoshaphat's death, Jehoram his son reigns in his stead, (a successor to the kings of Israel in all wickedness and idolatry;) and as his life was wicked, so was his estate unfortunate, his end terrible, and his death ignominious. In his days did Edom make his final revolt from Judah, 2 Chron. xxi. 10, *the same time also did Libnah—because he had forsaken the Lord God of his fathers:* and ver. 14, saith Elijah to him by a letter, *Behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods.* And so God's judgments came upon him and his children; he himself dies of a lingering loathsome disease, without the wonted solemnities of funerals; and Ahaziah his youngest son (all the elder being slain by the Arabians, 2 Chron. xxii. 1.) is about a year after killed by Jehu executing judgment upon the house of Ahab. After all this were all the royal

Jehoshaphat:

Ahaziah:

seed of Judah destroyed by Athaliah, Joash son of Ahaziah only excepted, whose beginnings were good: the reformation of religion was perfect, for the external form, so long as Jehoiada the priest did live, but not complete for the number or quality of such as turned to the Lord their God; for the princes' hearts were wholly set upon idolatry; and the king himself is drawn upon his own destruction by them, after Jehoiada's death: as his beginnings were good and godly, so were his latter days idolatrous and cruel: and Zachariah's blood was recompensed upon his head, and upon the head of Amaziah his son; who, though he were not (like his father) guilty, as principal, of actual murder in putting a prophet to death; yet thus far by participation, guilty of his father's sin, that he is impatient of the prophet's just reproof: as his father killed, so he threatens the prophet for reproving him for his sins; for taking the gods of Edom for his gods, 2 Chron. xxv. 16, *Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.* His doom is read, and judgment follows; for he is shamefully foiled, 2 Chron. xxv. 23, by Joash king of Israel, and led captive home to his own good town of Jerusalem, four hundred cubits of whose walls were broke down to make entrance for his triumphant enemies in the sight of his own people. And after his freedom, bought with his own treasure, and with the treasure of the Lord's house, his own subjects conspire against him, and pursue him unto death, where he dies (his father's death) by the hands of his servants, 2 Chron. xxv. 27. As Amaziah from good beginnings grew idolatrous, so Uzziah his son, after good success,

Athaliah: Joash: 774 Amaziah: Uzziah:

became in his latter end sacrilegiously presumptuous; for intermeddling with the priest's office, he becomes liable to the priests' tribunal: he is judged a leper, and removed from administration of the kingdom, for the leprosy wherewith the Lord had smitten him, 2 Chron. xxvi.

5. Thus in process of time is still the increase of sin; either their kings are wicked, (as but two from David to Hezekiah's time which continued in good,) or if their kings be virtuous and religious, as Jehosha-
Jotham: phat had been, and Jotham son to Uzziah now is; yet in his days again the people's hearts are not prepared to serve the Lord; 2 Kings xv. 35, *Howbeit the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places;* and so kept in the fire of God's wrath, which had been long kindled against Judah, but not suffered to burst out into any flame in the days of righteous Jotham, and such as by his example followed righteousness. Nay, to encourage others to follow him, the Lord gave him victory over the enemies of Judah, and *he became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God,* 2 Chron. xxvii. 6.

6. But neither did he nor any prince of Judah,
Ahaz: since righteous David, so perfectly direct, as Ahaz his son did pervert his ways before the Lord. This is the first that adds stubbornness to infidelity, and *drunkenness to thirst,* as the Spirit tells us, 2 Chron. xxviii. 22: *And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord: this is that king Ahaz,* (saith the text): you must expect a remarkable monster in his dealings; *for he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me.*

But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel, verse 23. This people was always prone to wickedness, even during the reign of most religious kings; but are now so violently carried to all mischief, having got this preposterous monster for their governor, that as a ship sailing with advantage of wind and tide, and help of oars, continues motion when sail is stricken and rowers cease; so Jerusalem and Judah, after Ahaz their commander in mischief ceased from his wicked labours, held on still their mischievous courses, even in good king Hezekiah's days.

7. Whereas God's threatenings had been but par- 775
ticular heretofore, either to the king alone, or to his line and house, or of some momentary desolation upon the land; now God thunders out a general deluge of calamity to the city and people, by the prophet Micah: *Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem* Jer. xxvi. 18.
shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. Here the scattered clouds of God's judgments, which had long soared over Judah, are gathered as it were into one shower, ready to fall upon her, (as it were an hawk stooping to her prey,) but that good king Hezekiah, and the people by his example, laid fast hold upon his mercies, and averted his fierceh wrat from them by hearty and unfeigned prayer: *They feared the Lord, and prayed before him, and the Lord repented him of the evil that he had pronounced against him.* Whiles I behold the complete reformation which Hezekiah wrought, and Hezekiah:
the people's will to accord with him therein, methinks I hear the Lord wishing from heaven, as he did sometimes to their fathers in the wilderness, Deut. v. 29, *O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their*

children for ever! But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem, 2 Chron. xxxii. 25: not that it did seize upon them, but that it was ready to smite: for, as it follows, verse 26, *Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah*, but of Manasseh his son, who pulled it down upon his own and his people's heads; for, as it is registered, 2 Kings xxi. 3, *he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. And*, as if he meant to thrust the Lord out of his own house, *he built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord*, ver. 4, 5. And besides these and many other sins, wherewith he caused Judah to sin, and to do evil in the sight of the Lord after the abominations of the heathen, which the Lord had cast out before them, he filled Jerusalem from corner to corner with innocent blood, whose cry did fill the courts of heaven. So both he and his people are plagued for their grievous sins; he is the first king of Judah that is led into captivity, yet upon his returning to the Lord his God he is restored again[q]. But his good example doth not move his people's hearts unto like repentance, as his former bad example had caused them to sin. Wherefore albeit the Lord repent him of the evil which had befallen his person, yet

Manasses:

[q] 2 Kings xxi. 16.

(Amon his son and successor imitating his father's sins, but not his repentance, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21,) doth he not turn away from his fierce wrath wherewith he was angry against Judah: albeit Josiah his virtuous nephew (or grandchild) had turned to him with all his heart, and with all his soul, according to all the law of Moses. Manasseh's sin therefore is said to be the cause why the Lord did cast off Judah, in such a sense as the addition of the last weight may be said to cast the scale, which was inclined that way before, albeit restrained from motion by a counterpoise, until the last weight overpowered the restraint. God's wrath remained still upon the land, from Solomon's and Rehoboam's reign; and the weight of his judgments was daily increased more and more; howsoever the final execution of them was deferred, at the instant prayers of religious kings and righteous people: but now Manasseh hath made up the full measure of all his forefathers' sins; the weight of God's judgments hath so far overgrown his mercies, that there is no hope of recovery left, unless prince, priest, and people would fill Jerusalem as full with their repentant tears as Manasseh had with blood; and devote the whole course of their life to doing good, as their forefathers had sold themselves to work wickedness; which good Josiah for his part performs, and so deads the stroke of God's judgments whilst they are in motion. But his people's hearts are not so strongly set on their God. Although they join with him in renewing the covenant betwixt God and them, the chief strength of their zeal and fervency is spent in the first act of repentance, or in the motion of their retire to God; their permanent disposition and propension is not firm; their very turning unto God is rather forced than voluntary; so as they hold off God's judgments only for a time;

Amon:

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Good Josiah:

as if a man by haling and pulling with might and main should keep some heavy and mighty body from falling, or some great weight from swaying the full compass; whereas the solid weight of it still remains the same, and will have full sway when his actual strength fails him. Thus they quickly become weary of well-doing, and God's heaviest judgments take their course. For however it be said, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33, *That they did not turn back from the Lord God of their fathers all the days of Josiah*, yet was this their cleaving to him but compelled; it consisted more in the outward solemnity, or public fashion, than in inward sincerity and integrity: they did not profess, or openly practise the solemn worship of strange gods; but had still a longing after foreign fashions, as appears out of the prophet Zephaniah, who wrote of those times, chap. i. 8, 9, *And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel. In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.* The corruption of both the clergy and magistracy had continued grievous from Hezekiah's days, wherein it cried for vengeance[r]. And this people's repentance of these sins in Josiah's days was either none, or but feigned and hypocritical; as the same prophet testifieth, ch. iii. 1—4, *Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God. Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests*

[r] See this author's sermons on Jer. xxvi. [vol. vi. p. 49, &c.]

have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law. And even for this people's proneness to fulfil the measure of their forefathers' sins was good Josiah removed from off the earth, lest God's judgments should come upon Jerusalem in his days. And no marvel if the fulness of Judah's sin be accomplished in Josiah's days, though he were the most righteous prince of David's line; for sin and iniquity may so abound in a land and people, that albeit *Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness*[s]. And it is one of the best notes that I have somewhere found, that men should not lay all the blame on princes where states miscarry, seeing it is said, that Hosea, in whose days Israel was led into captivity, was either the best or least evil of all the kings of Israel, *He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him*, 2 Kings xvii. 2. Which equity of God's judgments in like cases, Francis Sforza, the last duke of that race in Milan, and the far best of all his kindred, except the first, did with humility acknowledge, before the foolish politician's schoolmistress, experience, taught him the truth by the evidence of the event; for when his wise and gravest counsellors did humbly entreat him in the behalf of state and country to suffer at least some provisions to be brought up secretly as his own, lest Milan might be delivered up to some foreigner, he requested them to set their hearts at rest; the unhappy family had run their race; and it was impossible but that the bloody practices of his ancestors should blot out the very name in him: a prince, though otherwise in Charles the Fifth's esteem the wisest of all the Italian princes in his time, yet herein endued with

Francis Sforza.

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[s] Ezek. xiv. 14; Jer. xv.

wisdom in an higher rank than the stateliest potentates are wont to trouble themselves withal, in that he could so well foresee there was no counsel against the Lord; whose decrees concerning any land or people then usually take place, whenas posterity seeks earnestly by secular policy to patch up the rents and breaches of a state decayed and ruinate by the heavy burden of their predecessors' sins. Such was the temper of Josiah's statesmen and princes, though his heart was of another metal, and had been fashioned in another mould. Wherefore the book of the law, which had long laid buried, is now risen out of the dust, to proclaim Jerusalem's downfall and Sion's burial in her ashes. And this sentence of the law now found, is ratified by the prophetess Huldah's mouth: *God's wrath shall presently be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.* But unto good Josiah, who sought the prophetess's, and not the politician's advice, is this sole comfort left: *But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard; Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place*[t], 2 Kings xxii. 18.

[t] It is significantly added, *He should be put in his grave in peace,* because he is the last king of Judah whose funeral rites are not at their enemies' disposing. See the foregoing sermon upon Jer. xlv. [above, p. 120.]

8. But should not his righteousness have saved him? or is this to be put in his grave in peace, to be slain by his enemies? Yes, this his burial was in peace, in that he was buried in the sepulchres of his fathers, and mourned for by all his people, without the molestation of their enemies. This was a blessing of peace which none of his sons or successors enjoyed; for of them all, not one but dies captive in the enemies' land, or in their own, without the decency of princely funerals. And who knows whether Josiah's violent death was deserved by going to battle without the Lord's advice? Yea, who knows whether the Lord did not thus suddenly take him away, partly to prevent the increase of that disease wherewith no prince of all the stock of Judah but had been more or less infected, and which now, as it seemeth, was growing on him. All of them in their prosperity began to trade in secular policy, whose practice was Jerusalem's ruin and Judah's wreck; howsoever, right dear in the sight of the Lord was the death of this holy and religious king, who, if he had lived the longer, should have died the oftener. His children's and people's sins are now full ripe for the sword; and their vengeance hastens on so fast, that either he must suddenly die, or else see their manifold miseries, far worse than so many several deaths. For what pangs would it have caused in his tender heart, which melted even whilst the noise of Jerusalem's curse did but approach his ears, if his eyes should have beheld the flames of God's fierce wrath devouring her gates, and his ears had been filled with her woful outcries in the days of mourning! For Jeremiah or Baruch, two prophets so 778
poor that their forewarnings of these miseries could not merit any credit with their politic generation, to live and see the event, was a blessing of God, and bare

life given them a bountiful prey; but what benefit could so great a prince have reaped by life? What comfort in length of days, to have seen the children of his loins, born unto higher hopes than any princes of the world besides, either led captive into the enemy's land, or made a prey unto the birds of heaven in their own! Much better an enemy's arrow stick once for all fast in his side, than that the sword should continually pierce through his soul, whilst he should see his dearest people cut down like grass, and Judah, the Lord's enclosure, laid open, like a common field, to their bordering enemy's spoil; and Jerusalem, his heart's joy, which the Lord had hedged and walled about, laid waste like a forlorn vineyard, whose grapes were wild and naught. Yet such are the days which immediately ensue his death: the land is one while ransacked by the Egyptian; another while made tributary to the Chaldean; another while foraged by the Aramite, Ammonite, and Moabite, until it was utterly laid waste. For judgment is here begun already at the house of God; and in godly Josiah's fall might the ungodly Judah read her fatal destiny registered in characters of blood. And doubtless at this sudden unexpected end the execution of God's fierce and violent wrath did begin; of the successive degrees whereof, I shall, God willing, hereafter speak. For the manner of it, I only note thus much now in general: that not all the wisdom of their most politic enemies, albeit the Lord had given them liberty to have plotted this people's overthrow at their pleasure, could have invented so ready and sure a course for their swift destruction, as this people themselves (in great policy to their seeming) still make choice of. Not one project which they can forecast, but proves an inevitable gin to entrap themselves, and is as a fatal snare unto their own feet.

9. First good Josias, without warrant from God, or his prophet's advice, thinks it in policy the safest course to assault the Egyptian in the confines of his country, lest afterwards he should be enforced to defend himself upon harder terms, nearer to the heart of Judah, from his enemy strengthened with the spoil of her borders; so jealous he is of Necho's purpose, which meant him no harm, that his word will not serve him for warrant, albeit his words, as the text saith, were *from the mouth of God*[u]. The issue of his policy is, that he himself is slain, and Pharaoh Necho, by this his unseasonable provocation, took a fair pretence of invading the land after his death, and condemns it in an hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. And for the effecting of this his purpose, the people themselves had given occasion; for they (no doubt out of some politic purpose) had preferred the younger brother Jehoahaz to the kingdom; who (poor caitiff) instead of swaying David's sceptre in the promised land, is after three months' space led captive in chains (like a bondslave) into Egypt, whence the Lord had redeemed the meanest of this people's forefathers. So contrary hath Judah been in all her courses, that all the glorious hopes of David's line run backwards; so far is the calendar of Jerusalem's good days run out of date, such are the revolutions of times, that this light which they had set up for David hath taken darkness for its habitation; the sun of their comfort is set before it came to the meridian, and runs away out of their hemisphere; and in his stead a comet ariseth out of Egyptian exhalations, which portends nothing but war and blood: this is Jehoiakim, whom Pharaoh Necho, which slew his father, hath 77

Johanan or Jehoahaz.

Jehoiakim.

[u] 2 Chron. xxxv. 22.

now appointed to be king over this people for his purpose; the success of whose reign in general the people might well prognosticate by his life and manners: the epitome of which, Josephus, lib. 10. cap. 5, hath given very pithily in two words: "He was neither religious towards God, nor just towards men." And yet, besides this, his natural disposition was particularly incensed against this people, for preferring his younger brother to the crown[z], and so more ready to wreak his spite, by reason of his dependence upon the Egyptian, out of whose country he had the prophet Uriah brought, to satiate his thirst of blood, Jer. xxvi. 23: which bloody fact of his, and the like, (with their like success,) is the train I have pursued in these present meditations.

I will conclude them with that of Solomon, Prov. xxviiii. 2: *For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof.* And of Judah never a good one after Josiah; such they were as might serve to scourge this people, until they were cast like vagabonds and unprofitable members out of that city and land which had bred them.

10. Thus you see God's largest promises have their limits; greatest prosperity hath a period, and mightiest kingdoms have their fall. You have likewise seen how for the uncircumcised hearts of this people is he slain by uncircumcised hands, who had so throughly cleansed Jerusalem and Judah from all the abominations of the heathen; the heroical attempts of whose princely resolution and zeal, in restoring the true worship of God unto this people, needs not mine, it hath the commendations of God's Spirit, who hath

[z] Query. See 1 Chron. iii. 15. where Johanan is called the first-born, yet Josephus, l. 10. c. 5, in English, says, that Eliakim, who is also Jehoiakim, was elder brother to Jehoahaz.

been curious in calculating his particular good deeds throughout this chapter, to have been matchless in David's race; and how then possible to be paralleled in any other prince's line? And what if, through the religious care and industry of some one or two princes, whom the Lord in mercy had raised up as lights unto this land, the foggy mists of superstition, heresy, and idolatry, be driven hence? This is an infallible testimony of God's former love unto our forefathers, no sure document of our continuance in his favour, if yet this land and people may be taken in the very manner of those capital crimes which did condemn Judah (his firstborn amongst the nations) in the days of good Josiah, even whilst it was acquitted from profession of idolatry and superstition. What shall it avail us, that those foreign hungry hell-hounds, which brought commissions of charter-warrant for hunting out the good things of this land, and made this people a prey for maintenance of the many-headed beast, have been long time prohibited to continue their wonted range, if the princes which are left within her be as roaring lions, and her judges as wolves in the evening, which leave not the bones until the morrow? What avails it, that the secular priests and Jesuits are (would God they were!) transported out of this land, if her own prophets be light and wicked persons, and her priests pollute the sanctuary, and wrest the law? Or what shall it avail us, that the light of the gospel doth shine amongst us, *if the just Lord be in the midst of us, and every morning bring forth judgment unto light, and fail not, and yet the wicked will not learn to be ashamed?* Or what avails it, that we have cast off all blind obedience to the see of Antichrist, if we will not suffer God's providence to be a rule, and Christ's word a light unto our paths, but walk on

still in the ways of the heathens, making secular observations our chief confidence, and worldly policy our greatest trust? Or what avails it to have purged our hearts from all conceit of merit, if we pollute our
780 hands with bribes? Or what avails it to give God the glory in all good actions, and yet daily dishonour his name with bad dealings? I will speak more plainly: what advantageth it us to object unto the papists, that they seek to merit heaven by their works, and share with God in the honour of good deeds, if they can truly reply upon us, that the free alms of papists, founders, have been by protestants set on sale unto their brethren? or that secular appendices and alliance of spiritual men devour a great part of that liberal maintenance, which was allotted only for prophets and prophets' children?

11. Beloved in our Lord, were we ourselves without sin, without these enormous sins which I have mentioned, all of us might freely attempt to stone that filthy whore, and all her foul adulterers, unto death. But such of us as seek most to purge the land of them, and seek not withal to cleanse our own hearts of those sins which have procured God's wrath against it, may justly dread, lest we find no better success than good Josiah did, to provoke the enemy to do more mischief than haply they meant. Mistake me not, I beseech you, as though I misliked such as solicit severity against that nation; yet cannot I hope, but some will be as jealous of me as these Jews of Josiah's and Jehoiakim's days were always of the prophet Jeremiah, whose footsteps I have resolved to follow through good and bad report. Give me leave to explain my meaning, thus:

As from my heart I reverence their religious labours, who have of late so effectually stirred up our sove-

reign's heart to this purpose, and earnestly request your hearty prayers unto Almighty God, that his holy Spirit may continually inflame his royal heart with those good motions which have been kindled in it of late; so do I desire, from the very centre of my soul, both that men of place, authority, gravity, learning, and integrity of life, may prosecute it; and that young divines (whether young in years or manners, it skills not) would oftentimes, even for Sion's sake, hold their peace, or at least be wary where and when they open their mouths in this argument. For he that looks into the temper of this present people with a discreet, religious, not with a turbulent factious eye, may easily discern that many ill-tempered and extravagant invectives against papists, (made by men whose persons wanting authority, as much as their speeches do reason,) do nothing else but set an edge upon our adversary's sword; whilst the light behaviour and bad example of the inveigher's life infuseth courage to their hearts, and addeth strength unto their arms. In one word, many of our words in this place increase the wrath, and many of our lives out of this place increase the number of that faction.

12. Though all of us by profession are Christ's soldiers, yet every soldier is not fit for any service. Albeit, I discourage no man; I only advise that every man that means to be a valiant soldier in Christ, and would do his Master good service in so just a quarrel, would first begin to try his valour in the reformation of his own life, in expelling all dissolute and inveterate lusts, all immoderate and unruly desires out of his own heart: *So shall the words of his mouth, and the meditations of his heart, be always acceptable in the sight of the Lord, his only strength and his Redeemer:* in whose strength and valour alone we must assault

and vanquish our malicious adversaries. And unless reformation do, certainly *judgment will begin at the houses of God;* at those living temples of his, which have the platforms of true religion in them, but are not edified in good works. *Let not the eunuch say,*
781 *I am a dry tree;* nor let the meanest amongst us, either in learning, wit, or outward estate, think that he can do nothing in this case. For if we have but true faith, we all know that it is not the resolute soldier's arm, nor the severest magistrate's sword, nor the cunningest politician's head, nor the potent custom of law, that sets or keeps kings' crowns upon their heads, but the lifting up of pure hearts and holding up clean hands to Him that giveth wisdom to the wise and strength to the strong, to Him which hath the soldier's arm, the magistrate's sword, the politician's wisdom, all power, all fulness, at his disposal. Wherefore, beloved in our Lord, if either love to God, or love to prince; if either love to that religion which we profess, or love unto those pleasant places which we inhabit, or the good things belonging to them which we possess; if love to any or all of these can move our hearts, (as whose heart is there but is moved to some of these?) O let them move them in time unto repentance, that we may enjoy these blessings the longer. Let us draw near unto our God, and he will draw near to us; let us cleanse our minds, and lift up pure hands and hearts unto the Lord; for only such can lay fast hold upon his mercy; lest our continuance in our own daily transgressions, added to the heavy weight of our predecesssors' sins, pull down God's sudden judgments upon this land, prince, and people.

13. And as for such, O Lord, as set their faces against heaven and against thee, to work wickedness

in thy sight, and hold on still to fill up the full measure of their forefathers' sins, and cause the overflowing vengeance of thy wrath; Lord, let them all perish suddenly from the earth, and let their posterity vanish hence like smoke, ere, for their provocations wherewith they provoke thee daily, the breath of our nostrils, thine anointed servant, be taken in those nets which the uncircumcised daily spread for him.

And let us, beloved, whom he loves so dearly, seek to fill this land with the good example of our lives and incense of our hearty prayers, that under his shadow, and the shadow of his royal offspring, we of this place, with this land and people, may be preserved alive from all strange or domestic tyranny. Amen.

CHAP. XLVI.

MATTHEW XXIII. 37.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

1. THE sum of my last meditations upon the former verses was[a], that, notwithstanding our Saviour's prediction or threatening of all those plagues shortly to befall Jerusalem, there was even at this time a possibility left for this people to have continued a flourishing nation; a possibility left for their repentance; that their repentance and prosperity was the end whereat the Lord himself did aim in sending prophets and wise men, and lastly, his only Son unto them.

[a] See the foregoing sermon on Matt. xxiii. 34. See Signs of th Times, [vol. vi. p. 110, &c.]

The former of the two parts—the possibility of their prosperity and repentance—was proved from the perpetual tenor of God's covenant with this people, first
782 made with Moses, afterward renewed with David and Solomon, and ratified by Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The tenor of the covenant, as you then heard, was a covenant, not of death only, but of life and death; of life, if they continued faithful in his covenant; of death, if they continued in disobedience.

The latter part of the same assertion, viz., that this people's repentance and prosperity was the end intended by God, was proved from that delaration of his desire of their everlasting prosperity, Deut. v. 29: *O that there were such an heart in this people, to fear me, and keep my commandments always, that it might go well with them, and their posterity for ever!* And the like place, Psalm lxxxi. 13. Isaiah xlviii. 18.

These places manifest God's love, and desire of this people's safety; but the abundance, the strength, with the unrelenting constancy and tenderness of his love, is in no place more fully manifested than in these words of my text. The abundant fervency we may note in the very first words, in that his mouth, which never spake idle nor superfluous word, doth here ingeminate the appellation, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem.* This he spake out of the abundance of his love. But love is ofttimes fervent or abundant for the present, or whiles the object of our love remains amiable, yet not so constant and perpetual, if the quality of what we loved be changed. But herein appears the strength and constancy of God's love, that it was thus fervently set upon Jerusalem, not only in her pure and virgin days, or whiles she continued as chaste and loyal as when she was affianced unto the Lord by David, but upon Jerusalem, often drunk with the cup of fornica-

tions; upon her, long stained and polluted with the blood of his dearest saints, which she had even mingled with her sacrifices; upon Jerusalem and her children, when (after he had cleansed her infected habitations with fire, and carried her inhabitants beyond Babylon into the north land, as into a more fresh and pure air; yet, after their return thence, and replantation in their own land) returned with the dog to his vomit, and with the washed sow to wallowing in the mire, *God would have gathered even as the hen doth her chickens under her wings*, &c.

2. In which words, besides the tenderness of God's love towards these castaways, is set out unto us the safety of his protection, so they would have been gathered. For as there is no creature more kind and tender than the hen unto her young ones, none that doth more carefully shroud and shelter them from the storm, none that doth more closely hide them from the eye of the destroyer, so would God have hidden Jerusalem under the shadow of his wings from all those storms which afterward overwhelmed her, and from the Roman eagle, to whom this whole generation present became a prey. If so Jerusalem, with her children, after so many hundred years' experience of his fatherly love and tender care, had not remained more foolish than the new hatched brood of reasonless creatures; if so they had not been ignorant of his call that had often redeemed them from their enemies—*How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not!*

Here were large matter for rhetorical digressions, or mellifluous encomions of divine love: points wherein many learned divines have in later times been very copious, yet still leaving the truth of that love which

they so magnify very questionable. It shall suffice me at this time,

Two points propounded.

First, to prove the undoubted truth and unfeignedness of God's tender love even towards such castaways as these proved, to whom he made this protestation;

783 Secondly, to unfold (as far as is fitting for us to inquire) how it is possible that they should not be gathered unto God, nor saved by Christ, whose gathering and whose safety, he, to whom nothing can be impossible, had so earnestly, so tenderly, and constantly longed after.

These are points of such use and consequence, that if God shall enable me, soundly though plainly, to unfold their truth, you will, I hope, dispense with me for want of artificial exornations, or words more choice than such as naturally spring out of the matters handled, as willingly as the poor amongst you pardon good housekeepers for wearing nothing but homespun cloth. For as it is hard for a man of ordinary means to bestow much on his own back, and feed many bellies, so neither is it easy for me and my present opportunities both to feed your souls with the truth, and to clothe my discourse with choice words and flourishing phrases. And I am persuaded many preachers might in this argument often prove more theological, so they could be content to be less rhetorical. My purpose is not to dissent from any of the reformed churches, but only in those particulars wherein they evidently dissent from themselves, and from general principles of truth acknowledged by all that believe God or his word.

3. Were I to speak in some audience of this point, it would be needful to dip my pen in nectar, or sweeten

my voice with ambrosia, to allay the harshness of this position, that God should so earnestly desire the conversion of such as perish. Howbeit, the surest grounds of that charity which God requires should be in every one of us towards all, (our greatest enemies not excepted,) is firm belief of this his unspeakable love towards all, even towards such as kill his prophets, and stone the messengers of their peace: *I exhort*, saith the apostle, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, *that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority.* Yet did most such in those days *oppress Christians, and draw them before judgment seats*, James ii. 6, even because *they did pray unto the true God for them who did blaspheme that worthy name*, &c., ver. 7. This duty, notwithstanding, (which was so odious unto those great and rich men for whose good it was performed,) St. Paul tells us, was *good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour*, 1 Tim. ii. 3. Why acceptable in his sight? because, ver. 4, *he would have all men* (and therefore the sworn enemies of the gospel) *to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth* which they now oppugned. Or if the express authority of the apostle suffice not, his reasons, drawn from the principles of nature, will persuade such as have not quenched the light of nature, by setting, not the corruptions only, but the very essence of nature at odds with grace; *for*, ver. 5, *there is one God;* had there been more, every one might have been conceived as partial for his own creatures. But, inasmuch as all of us have but *one Father*, his love to every one must needs be greater than any earthly parent's love unto their children, inasmuch as we are more truly his than children are their parents'. But here (as the apostle foreseeth) might be replied, that albeit God be one, and

God earnestly desires the conversion of such as perish: the former point.

the only Creator of all, yet, inasmuch as all of us are the seed of rebels, with whom he is displeased, our Mediator might be more partial, and commend some to God's love, neglecting others: to prevent this scruple, the apostle adds, ver. 5, that as there is but *one God*, so there is but *one mediator between God and man*, and he of the same nature with us, a man. But men are partial, yet so is not *the man Christ Jesus;* that is, the man anointed by the Holy Ghost to be the Saviour of the world. As he truly took our flesh upon
784 him that he might be a faithful and affectionate High Priest, so, that we might conceive of him as of an unpartial Solicitor or Mediator betwixt God and us, he took not our nature enstamped with any individual properties, characters, or references to any one tribe or kindred. Father, according to the flesh, he had none, but was framed by the sole immediate hand of God, to the end, that as the eye, because it hath no set colour, is apt to receive the impression of every colour; so Christ, because he had not those carnal references which others have, but was without father, without brother, without sister on earth, might be unpartial towards all, and account *every one that doth the will of his Father which is in heaven, as sister, mother, and brother. Thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off*[b]. Briefly, he is a brother to all mankind, more loving and more affectionate than brothers of entire blood are one towards another.

4. The very ground of the apostle's reason, thus

[b] Isaiah lvi. 4, 5.

bared, will of its own accord reverberate that distinction which hath been laid against his meaning by some otherwise most worthy defendants of the truth. The distinction is, that when the apostle saith, *God will have all men to be saved*, he means, *genera singulorum*, not *singula generum;* some few of all sorts, not all of every sort: some rich, some poor, some learned, some unlearned, some Jews, some Gentiles, some Italians, some English[c], &c. The illustrations which they bring to justify this manner of speech, did the time permit, I could retort upon themselves, and make them speak more plainly for my opinion than for theirs. It shall be sufficient by the way to note the impertinency of the application, supposing the instances brought by them were justfiable by the illustrations which they bring; or to shew how little it could weaken our assertion, although it might intercept all the strength or aid this place affords for the fortification of it. For what can it help them to turn these words (because they make towards us) from their ordinary and usual meaning, or to restrain God's love only unto such as are saved, whenas the current of it in other passages of scripture is evidently extended unto such as perish? Instead of many words unto this purpose, uttered by him that cannot lie, those few, Ezekiel xxxiii. 11, shall content me: *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

If God will the safety of such as perish, yea even of most desperate stubborn sinners, no question but he

[c] About this distinction, see [vol. v. p. 148.] and book 9. book 6. (or Attributes) chap. 15. chap. 5. [vol. viii. p. 216.]

wills all should be saved, and come unto the knowledge of his truth. The former distinction then will not stop this passage. Howbeit, some learned amongst the schoolmen, and other most religious writers of later times, have sought out another for intercepting all succour this or the like places might afford to the maintenance of that truth which they oppugn and we defend. That God doth not will the death of sinners *voluntate signi*, they grant; but that he wills it *voluntate beneplaciti*, they take as granted; that is, in other terms, God doth not will the death of him that dies by his revealed will, but by his secret will. Not to urge them to a better declaration than hitherto they have made, in what sense God (being but one) may be said to have two wills; that he wills many things which we know not, that he hath divers secret purposes, we
785 grant, and believe as most true, indefinitely taken; but, because these wills or purposes are secret, man may not, man cannot, without presumption, determine the particular matters which he so willeth or purposeth, otherwise they should not be *secret*, but *revealed unto us*, whereas *things secret*, as secret, *belong only unto God*, Deut. xxix. 29. In that they oppose God's secret will to God's revealed will, they do (as it were) put in a caveat, that we should not believe it in those particulars whereto they apply it. For we may not believe any thing concerning the salvation or damnation of mankind, or the means which lead to either, save what is revealed; but this secret will is not revealed, therefore not to be believed. Nor are we by the principles of reformed religion bound only not to believe it, but utterly to disclaim it. For, admitting (what was before granted) an indefinite belief, that God wills many things which he keeps secret from us, yet we must absolutely believe, that he never wills any thing secretly which

shall be contrary or contradictory to that whereon his will revealed is set, or to that which by the express warrant of his written word we know he wills. Now every Christian must infallibly and determinately believe, that God wills not the death of the wicked, or of him that dies, seeing his written word doth plainly register his peremptory determination of this negative; therefore no man may believe the contradictory to this, to wit, that he wills the death of him that dies; otherwise, this distinction admitted untwines the very bonds of man's salvation. For what ground of hope have the very elect, besides God's will revealed, or (at the best) confirmed by oath? Now if we might admit it but as probable, that God *voluntate beneplaciti*, or by his secret will, may purpose some things contrary to what he promises by his revealed will, who is he that could have, I say not, any certainty, but any moral probability of his salvation? seeing God assures us of salvation only by his word revealed, not by his secret will or purpose, which, for aught we do or possibly can know, may utterly disannul what his revealed will seems to ratify. Lastly, it is an infallible rule or maxim in divinity, that we may not attribute any thing to the most pure and perfect essence of the Deity which includes any imperfection in it; much less may we ascribe any impurity or untruth unto that Holy One, the author of all truth. But to swear one thing, and to reserve a secret meaning, contrary to the plain and literal meaning professed, is the very idea of untruth, the essence of impious perjury, which we so much condemn in some of our adversaries, who, if this distinction might generally pass for current amongst us, might retort, that we are as maliciously partial against the Jesuits, as the Jews were against Christ Jesus; that we are ready to blaspheme God

rather than spare to revile them; seeing we attribute that unto his divine majesty which we condemn in them as most impious, and contrary to his sacred will, who will not dispense with equivocation, or mental reservation, be the cause wherein they are used never so good; because to swear one thing openly, and secretly to reserve a contradictory meaning, is contrary to the very nature and essence of the first truth; the most transcendent sin that can be imagined. Wherefore, as this distinction was lately hatched, so it were to be wished that it might quickly be extinguished, and lie buried with their bones that have revived it. Let God be true in all his words, in all his sayings, but especially in all his oaths, and let the Jesuit be reputed as he is, a double dissembling perjured liar.

5. The former place of Ezekiel, as it is no way impeached by this distinction last mentioned, so doth
786 it plainly refute another gloss put upon my text by some worthy and famous writers: *How oft would I have gathered you, and ye would not*, &c. These words, say they, were uttered by our Saviour manifesting his desire as man. But unless they be more than men which frame this gloss, Christ as man was greater than they, and spake nothing but what he had in express commission from his Father. We may then, I trust without offence, take his words as here they sound, for a better interpretation of his Father's will, than any man can give of his meaning in this passage uttered by himself in words as plain as they can devise.

An odd gloss refuted.

These words indeed were spoken by the mouth of him that was man, yet by a mouth as truly manifesting the desire and good-will of God for the salvation of his people, as if they had been immediately uttered

by the Godhead without the organ or instrument of human voice. But why should we think they were conceived by Christ, as he was man, not rather by him as the *mediator between God and man*, as the second Person in the Trinity, manifested in our flesh? He saith not, *Behold, my Father hath sent*, but, in his own person, *I have sent unto you prophets, and wise men*, &c. Nor is it said, *How often would my Father*—but, *How often would I have gathered you!* This gathering we cannot refer only to the three years of his ministry, but to the whole time of Jerusalem's running astray from the prophets' calls: from the first time that David first took possession of it, till the last destruction of it. For all this time, he that was now sent by his Father in the similitude of man, did send *prophets, wise men*, and *apostles*[d], to reclaim them, if they would have hearkened to him or his messengers' admonitions. St. Luke puts this out of controversy, for, repeating part of this story, he saith expressly, *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets*, &c. And Christ is styled, *The wisdom of God*, not as man, but as God; and consequently he spake these words, not as man only, but as God. The same compassion and burning love, the same thirst and longing after Jerusalem's safety, which we see here manifested by a manner comprehensible to flesh and blood, in these words of our Saviour in my text, (or the like uttered by him, Luke xix, with tears and sobs,) we must believe to be as truly, as really and unfeignedly, in the divine nature, though by a manner incomprehensible to flesh and blood. How any such flagrant desire of their welfare, which finally perish, should be in God, we cannot conceive, because our minds are more dazzled

[d] Luke xi. 39.

with that inaccessible light which he inhabits, than the eyes of bats and owls are by gazing on the sun. To qualify this incomprehensible glory of the Deity, the Wisdom of God was made flesh, that we might safely behold the true model or proportion of divine goodness in our nature: as the eye, which cannot look upon the sun in his strength, or as it shines in the firmament, may without offence behold it in the water, being an element homogeneal to its own substance. Thus should all Christ's prayers, desires, or pathetical wishes of man's safety be to us as so many visible pledges, or sensible evidences, of God's invisible and incomprehensible love; and so he concludes his last invitation of the Jews: *I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* John xii. 49, 50.

And what saith our Saviour more in his own, than the prophet had done in the name and person of his God? Isaiah xlix. 14: *Zion complained, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.*
787 But he answered; *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands,* &c. vv. 15, 16. These and the like places of the prophets, compared with our Saviour's speech here in my text, give us plainly to understand, that whatsoever love any mother can bear to the fruit of her womb, (unto whom her bowels of compassion are more tender than the father's can be,) or whatsoever affection any dumb creature can afford unto their tender brood, the like, but greater, doth God

bear unto his children. Unto the elect most will grant; but is his love so tender towards such as perish? Yes; the Lord carried the whole host of Israel (even the stubborn and most disobedient) *as the eagle doth her young ones upon her wings.* Exod. xix. 4.

Earthly parents will not vouchsafe to wait perpetually upon their children. The hen continueth not her call from morning to night, nor can she endure to hold out her wings all day for a shelter to her young ones; as they grow great, and refuse to come, she gives over to invite them. But (saith the Lord by his prophet) *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick; which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels; which say,* (adding hypocrisy unto filthiness and idolatry,) *Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou.* Isaiah lxv. 2—5. Such they were, and so conceited of our Saviour, with whom he had in his lifetime oft to deal, and for whose safety he prayed with tears before his passion.

These and many like passages of scripture are pathetically set forth by the Spirit, to assure us, that there is no desire like unto the Almighty's desire of sinful man's repentance, no longing to his longing after our salvation. If God's love to Judah, coming to the height of rebellion, had been less than man's or other creature's love to what they affect most dearly; if the means he used to reclaim her had been fewer, or less probable, than any others had attempted

for obtaining their most wished end, his demand (to which the prophet thought no possible answer could be given) might easily have been put off by these incredulous Jews, unto whom he had not referred the judgment in their own cause; if they could have instanced in man or other creature, more willing to do what possibly they could do, either for themselves or others, than he was to do whatsoever was possible to be done for them: *And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?* Isaiah v. 3, 4.

The second point, How is it possible they should not begathered, if God so earnestly will, &c. as above, p. 364.

6. But the greater we make the truth and extent of God's love, the more we increase the difficulty of the second point proposed. For amongst women many there be that would, amongst dumb creatures scarce any that would not, redeem their sucklings from death by dying themselves. Yet what is it that they can do, which they would not do to save their own lives? And did not God so *love the world that he gave his only begotten Son for it?* Yes, for the world of the elect; I see not why any should be excluded from the number. But to let that pass; God's desire of their
788 repentance which perish is undoubtedly such as hath been said; yet should we say that he hath done all that could be done for them, how chanceth it that all are not saved? Was the vineyard more barren than Sarah? the fruit of whose womb he made like the stars of the sky, or as the sands by the sea-shore, innumerable. Was it a matter more hard to make the impenitent Jew bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, than to make a virgin conceive and bear a Son? If it were not, how chanceth it the word of the

Lord (and that but a short one) should bring the one to joyful issue, whilst the other, (the repentance of the Jews, and other ungodly men,) after so many exhortations and threatenings, after so many promises of comfort, and so many denunciations of woes, as the prophets, the apostles, and their successors have used, is not to this day, nor ever will be accomplished?

If repentance of men born and brought up in sin be a work altogether impossible, all of us should utterly perish, none repent; if possible to any, shall it not be possible to the Almighty, who alone can do all things? if possible to him, why is not repentance wrought in all, whose salvation he more earnestly desires than the most tenderhearted mother doth the life and welfare of her darling infant? Hence, with seeming probability, some may conclude, either that God's love unto such as perish is not so great as some mothers bear unto their children, or else his power in respect of them is not infinite. And against our doctrine, perhaps, it will be objected, that by thus magnifying God's love towards all, we minish his power towards some; from which to derogate aught, is, in some men's judgments, the worst kind of blasphemy; a point as dangerous in divinity, to speak but doubtfully or suspiciously of it, as in matter of state to determine or limit the prerogative royal. Howbeit, if no other choice were left, but a necessity were laid upon us of leaving either the infinite power or infinite goodness of our God questionable or unexpressed, the offence were less, to speak not so much of his power as most do, than to speak aught prejudicial to that conceit which even the heathens by light of nature had of his goodness. This attribute is the chief object of our love, and for which he himself desires to be loved most; and in this respect to derogate aught from it

must needs be most offensive. But his curse be upon him that will not unfeignedly acknowledge the absolute infiniteness as well of his power as of his goodness. Whosoever he be that loves his goodness, will unfeignedly acknowledge that he is to be feared and reverenced as the Almighty Creator, Preserver, and Judge of men; and unless he were in power infinite, he could not be infinitely good. Howbeit, he that restrains his love and tender mercy only unto such as are saved, doth make his goodness less (at least extensively) than his power. For there is no creature unto which his power reacheth not, but so doth not his lovingkindness extend to all, unless he desire the good and safety of such as perish.

7. For winding ourselves out of the former snare, we are to consider a main difference between the love of man or other creatures, and the love of God to mankind. Dumb creatures always affect what they most desire, if it be within the precincts of their power, because they have neither reason nor other internal law of right or wrong to control or countersway their brutish appetites. Man, although endued with reason, and natural notions of right and wrong, is notwithstanding ofttimes drawn by the strength or inordination of his tender affection to use such means as are contrary to
789 the rules of reason, equity, and religion, for procuring their safety or impunity on whom he dotes. Howbeit, among men we may find some which cannot be wrought by any promise or persuasion to use those unlawful courses for the impunity of their children or dearest friends which the world commonly most approveth; not that their love towards their children, friends, or acquaintance is less, but because their love to public justice, to truth and equity, and respect to their own integrity, is greater than other men's are.

A fit instance we have in Zaleucus, king of Locris, who having made a severe law, that whosoever committed such an offence (suppose adultery) should lose his eyes; it shortly after came to pass that the prince his son, and heir apparent to the crown, trespassed against this sanction. Could not the good king have granted a pardon to his son? He had power, no doubt, in his hands to have dispensed with this particular, without any danger to his person; and most princes would have done as much as they could for the safety of their successor; nor could privileges or indulgences upon such special circumstances be held as breaches or violations of public laws, because the prerogative of the person offending cannot be drawn into example. But Zaleucus could not be brought to dispense with his law, because he loved justice no less dearly than his son, whom he loved as dearly as himself; and to manifest the equality of his love to all three, he caused one of his own eyes and another of his son's to be put out, that so the law might have its due, though not wholly from his son that had offended, but in part from himself, as it were, by way of punishment for his partiality towards his son. It were possible, no doubt, for a king to reclaim many inferiors from theft, from robbery, or other ungracious courses, so he would vouchsafe to abate his own expenses to maintain theirs, or afford them the solaces of the court, make them his peers, or otherwise allow them means for compassing their wonted pleasures. But thus far to condescend to unthrifty subjects were ill beseeming that gravity and majesty which should be in princes. If one should give notice to a prince how easy and possible it were for him by these means to save a number from the gallows, his reply would be, *Princeps id potest quod salva majestate potest;* "That only is possible to a

prince which can stand with the safety of his majesty." But thus to feed the unsatiable appetites of greedy unthrifts, though such as he otherwise loves most dearly, and whose welfare he wishes as heartily as they do that thus speak for them, is neither princely nor majestical. For a king in this case to do as much as by some means possible he is able to do, were an act of weakness and impotency, not an act of sovereign power; a great blot to his wisdom, honour, or dignity, no true argument of royal love or princely clemency.

In like case we are to consider, that God, albeit in power infinite, yet his infinite power is matched with goodness as truly infinite; his infinite love is as it were counterpoised with infinite majesty; and though his infinite mercy be as sovereign to his other attributes, yet is it in a sort restrained by the tribunicial power of his justice. This equality of infiniteness betwixt his attributes being considered, the former difficulty is easily resolved. If it be demanded, whether God could not make a thousand worlds as good or better than this, it were infidelity to deny it. Why? Because this is an effect of mere power, and might be done without any contradiction to his goodness, to his majesty, to his mercy, or justice, all which it might serve to set forth. And this is a rule of faith; 'that
790 all effects of mere power, though greater than we can conceive as possible, may be done of him with greater ease than we can breathe.' His only word would suffice to make ten thousand worlds. But if it be questioned, whether God could not have done more than he had done for his vineyard; whether he cannot save such as daily perish; the case is altered, and breeds a fallacy *ad plures interrogationes*. For man's salvation is not a work of mere power, it necessarily requires an harmony of goodness, of majesty, of mercy

and justice, whereunto the infinite power is in a manner subservient. Nor are we to consider his infinite power alone, but as matched with infinite majesty; nor his infinite mercy and goodness alone, but as matched with infinite justice; and in this case it is as true of God as man: *Deus illud potest quod salva majestate potest, quod salva bonitate et justitia potest;* "God can do that which is not prejudicial to his majesty, to his goodness, and justice;" and he had done (if we may believe his oath) as much for his vineyard as the concurrence of his infinite power and wisdom could effect without disparagement to the infinity of his majesty, or that internal law or rule of infinite goodness whereby he created man after his own image and similitude.

8. God, as he hath his being, so hath he his goodness of himself; and his goodness is his being: as impossible therefore that he should not be good, as not be. Man, as he had his life and being, so had he his goodness wholly from his Creator. And as actual existence is no part, no necessary consequent of his essence, so neither is his goodness necessary or essential to his existence. As his existence, so his goodness is mutable; the one necessarily including a possibility of declination or decay, the other an inclination to relapse or falling into evil. As he was made after the similitude of God, he was actually and inherently good; yet was not his goodness essential, necessary, or immutable. Nor did he resemble his Creator in these essential attributes, but rather in the exercise of them *ad extra*.

Now that exercise was not necessary, but free in the Creator; for God might have continued for ever most holy, righteous, and good in himself, albeit he had neither created man nor other creature. Wherefore

he made them good, as he was freely good; and such is the goodness communicated to them in their creation, not necessary, but free; and if free, as well including a possibility of falling into evil, as an actual state of goodness.

If then you ask, could not God by his almighty power have prevented Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit; none, I think, will be so incredulous as to doubt, whether he that commanded the sun to stand still in his sphere, and did dead Jeroboam's arm when he stretched it out against the prophet, could not as easily have stayed Adam's hand from taking, or turned his eyes from looking upon, or his heart from lusting after the forbidden fruit. All these were acts of mere power. But had he by his omnipotent power laid this necessity upon Adam's will or understanding, or had he kept him from transgression by restraint, he had made him uncapable of that happiness whereto by his infinite goodness he had ordained him. For by this supposition he had not been good in himself. Nor could he be capable of true felicity, but he must be capable likewise of punishment and misery. The ground of his interest in the one, was his actual and inherent goodness, communicated in his creation; nor was he liable to the other, but by the mutability of his goodness, or possibility of falling into evil. In like manner, he that gave that known power and
791 virtue to the loadstone, could as easily draw the most stony hearted son of Adam unto Christ, as it doth steel and iron. But if he should draw them by such a necessary and natural motion, he should defeat them of all their hope or interest in that excessive glory which he hath prepared for those that love him. If again it be demanded, why God doth not save the impenitent and stubborn sinner; it is all one as if we

should ask, why he did not crown brute beasts with honour and immortality. That thus he could do by his infinite power, I will not deny; and if thus he would do, no creature justly might control him, none possibly could resist or hinder him. Yet I may (without presumption) affirm, that thus to do cannot stand with the eternal rule of his justice, goodness, and majesty. Nor can it stand better with the same rule to save all men, if we take them as they are, not as they might be, albeit he have endued all with reason to distinguish between good and evil. For many of them *speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.* Jude, ver. 10. It stands less with God's infinite goodness or power, if we consider them as linked with infinite justice or majesty, to bring such unto true happiness, than to advance brute beasts to immortality: *It is a people* (saith the prophet, Isaiah xxvii. 11.) *of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.* God, out of the abundance of his goodness, mercy, and longsuffering, tolerates such as the apostle and prophet speak of; and out of his infinite love seeks, by the preaching of his word, and other means not prejudicial to his justice and majesty, to gather them as he would have done Jerusalem here in my text. But, finally, there is a certain measure of iniquity which when it is full, or an height of stubbornness and profaneness, whereunto if once they come, the stroke of his infinite justice falls heavy upon them for wilful contempt of his infinite mercy; that is, as he himself somewhere saith, *he cannot any longer endure them.*

Quære, whether he mean not Jer. xliv. 22.

Three objections against this doctrine.

9. The suspicions whereto these resolutions will seem liable be especially three:

First, that they derogate from God's extraordinary favour towards his elect.

Answer to the first.

Our answer is brief; the offence, if any there be, is taken, not given; seeing we only affirm, that none so perish but that they had a possibility to be saved. We deny not that many are so saved, as it were not possible for them finally to perish. Yet so saved they are, not by God's infinite power laying a necessity upon their wills, but by his infinite wisdom preparing their hearts to be fit objects of his infinite mercy, and forecasting their final salvation as necessary by assenting not altogether necessarily unto the particular means whereby it is wrought; that is, in fewer terms, unto their salvation an infinite power, or infinite mercy matched with infinite justice, without an infinite wisdom, would not suffice. To call some (how many none may determine) extraordinarily, as he did St. Paul, may well stand with the eternal rule of his goodness, because he useth their miraculous or unusual conversion as a means to win others by his usual or ordinary calling. Special privileges, upon peculiar and extraordinary occasions, do not prejudice ordinary laws; albeit to draw such privileges into common practice would overthrow the course of justice. It is not contradictory then to the rule of God's justice, to make some feel his mercy and kindness before they seek it, that others may not despair of finding it; he having assured all by an eternal promise, that *seeking they shall find; and that they which hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be satisfied.*

792 Second objection and answer.

10. The second suspicion or imputation, is, that this doctrine may too much favour freewill.

In brief we answer, there have been two extremities in opinions continually followed by the two main factions of the Christian world; the one, that God hath so decreed all things, as that it is impossible aught should have been that hath not been, or not to have been which hath been. This was the opinion of the ancient Stoics, which attributed all events to fate; and it is no way mitigated, but rather improved, by referring this absolute necessity, not to second causes or nature, but to the omnipotent power of the God of nature. This was refuted in our last meditations, because it makes God the sole author of every sin.

The second extremity is, that in man, before his conversion by grace, there is a freedom or abiliment to do that which is pleasant and acceptable unto God, or an activity to work his own conversion. This was the error of the Pelagians, and is in part communicated to the modern papists, who hold a mean indeed, but a false one, betwixt the Pelagians and the Stoics.

The true mean from which these extremities swerve may be comprised in these two propositions: the one negative; 'In man, after Adam's fall, there is no freedom of will, or ability to do any thing not deserving God's wrath or just indignation.' The other affirmative; 'There is in man, after his fall, a possibility left of doing or not doing some things, which being done or not done, he becomes passively capable of God's mercies; doing or not doing the contrary, he is excluded from mercy, and remains a vessel of wrath for his justice to work upon.' For whether a man will call this contingency in humun actions, not a possibility of doing or not doing, but rather a possibility of acknowledging our infirmities or absolute impotency of doing any thing belonging or tending to our salvation, I will not contend with him. Only of this I rest

persuaded, that all the exhortations of prophets and apostles to work humility and true repentance in their auditors, suppose a possibility of humiliation and repentance; a possibility likewise of acknowledging and considering our own impotency and misery; a possibility likewise of conceiving some desire, not merely brutish, of our redemption or deliverance. Our Saviour, ye know, required not only a desire of health, of sight, of speech, in all those whom he healed, restored to sight, or made to speak, but withal a kind of natural belief or conceit that he was able to effect what they desired. Hence saith the evangelist, Mark vi. 5. Matt. xiii. 58, *He could not do many miracles among them because of their unbelief.* Yet Christ alone wrought the miracles, the parties cured were mere patients, no way agents. And such as solicited their cause, in case of absence, at the best were but bystanders. Now no man, I think, will deny that Christ, by the power of his godhead, could have given sight, speech, or health to the most obstinate and perverse; yet, by the rule of his divine goodness, he could not cast his pearls before swine. Most true it is, that we are altogether dead to life spiritual, unable to speak or think, much less to desire it as we should; yet belief and reason, moral and natural, survive, and may with Martha and Mary beseech Christ to raise their dead brother, who cannot speak for himself.

The third objection.

11. The third objection will rather be preferred in tabletalk, than seriously urged in solemn dispute: 'If God so earnestly desire or will the life and safety of such as perish, his will should not always be done.' Why? Dare any man living say or think that he always doth whatsoever God would have him do?

Answer.

So, doubtless, he should never sin or offend his God.

793 For never was there woman so wilful, or man so mad,

as to be offended with aught that went not against their present will; nor was there ever, or possibly can be, any breach of any law, unless the will of the lawgiver be broken, thwarted, or contradicted; for he that leaves the letter and follows the true meaning of the lawgiver's will, doth not transgress the law, but observes it. And unless God's will had been set upon the salvation of such as perish, they had not offended, but rather pleased him by running headlong in the ways of death.

Yet in a good sense it is always most true, that God's will is always fulfilled. We are therefore to consider, that God may will some things absolutely, others disjunctively; or that some things should fall out necessarily, others not at all, or contingently. The particulars which God absolutely wills, or which he wills should fall out necessarily, must of necessity come to pass; otherwise his will could in no case be truly said to be fulfilled. As unless the leper, to whom it was said by our Saviour, *I will, be thou clean*, had been cleansed, God's will manifested in these words had been utterly broken. But if every particular which he wills disjunctively, or which he wills should be contingent, did of necessity come to pass, his whole will should utterly be defeated. For his will (as we suppose) in this case is, that neither this nor that particular should be necessary, but that either they should not be, or be contingent. And if any particular, comprised within the latitude of this contingency, with its consequent, come to pass, his will is truly and perfectly fulfilled. As for example; God tells the Israelites, that by observing of his commandments they should live, and die by transgressing them. Whether therefore they live by the one means, or die by the other, his will is necessarily fulfilled,

because it was not that they should necessarily observe his commandments or transgress them, but to their transgressions, though contingent, death was the necessary doom; so was life the absolute necessary reward of their contingent observing them.

Another objection, with the answer thereto.

12. But the Lord hath sworn, *that he delights not in the death of him that dieth*, but in his repentance; if then he never repent, God's delight or good pleasure is not always fulfilled, because he delights in the one of these, not in the other. How then shall it be true which is written, *God doth whatsoever pleaseth him in heaven and earth*, if he make not sinners repent, in whose repentance he is better pleased than in their death?

But unto this difficulty the former answer may be rightly fitted[e]. God's delight or good pleasure may be done two ways, either by us or upon us. In the former place, it is set upon our repentance or obsequiousness to his will; for this is that service whereto by his goodness he ordained us; but if we cross his good-will or pleasure as it respects this point, that is, if we will not suffer ourselves to be saved, the same delight or pleasure is set upon our punishment, and fulfilled upon us; and if we would but enter into our own hearts, we might see the image of God's will, hitherto manifested by his word, distinctly written in them[f]; and that the rule which his infinite justice observes in punishing the wicked and reprobate, is to measure out their plagues and punishments according to the measure of their neglecting his will, or contradicting his delight in their salvation; that as the riches of his goodness leading them to repentance hath been more plentiful, so they by their impenitency still treasure

[e] See this author's 6th book, (or Attributes,) chapters 16 and 20. [vol. v. pp. 162. 188.]

[f] See book 6. [vol. v.]

up greater store of wrath against the day of wrath. To this purpose doth the Lord threaten the obstinate people before mentioned, Isaiah lxv. 5, 6, 7: *These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day. Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence,* 794
but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom, your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom. Both these parts of God's delight are fully expressed by Solomon, Prov. i. 20—23: *Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.* These passages infallibly argue an unfeigned delight in their repentance, and such a desire of their salvation, as the wisdom of God hath expressed in my text. But what follows? *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.* Thus his delight remains the same, but is set upon another object. To the same purpose, Isaiah lxv. 12: *Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.* So then, whether by the destruction of the wicked, or the

salvation of his chosen, God's name is still alike glorified; his justice exacts what should have been, but was not paid unto his mercy. He can be no loser by man's unthankfulness or ungraciousness; the case is all one, as if we should take that from a thief with the left hand which he had picked out of our right hand. Thus much of the two points proposed.

The whole use of this doctrine.

13. I do desire no more than that the tree may be judged by the fruit. And questionless the use of these resolutions, whether for convincing ourselves of sin, or quelling despair, or for encouraging the careless and impenitent unto repentance, by giving them right hold of the means of life, is much greater than can be conceived without admittance of their truth.

First, seeing the end of our preaching is not so much to instruct the elect, as to call sinners to repentance; not so much to confirm their faith that are already certain of salvation, as to give hope to the unregenerate that they may be saved; how shall we accomplish either intendment? By magnifying God's love towards the elect? Who these are, God and themselves know. How shall he which lives yet in sin persuade himself there is any probability he may be saved? Because God hath infallibly decreed to save some few? Rather, seeing by the contrary doctrine the most part of mankind must necessarily perish, he hath more reason to fear lest he be one of those many, than to hope that he is one of those few. The bare possibility of his salvation cannot be inferred but from indefinite premises, from which no certain conclusion can possibly follow. And without certain apprehension or conceit of possibility, there can be no sure ground of hope. But if we admit the former extent of God's unspeakable love to all, and his desire of their eternal safety which desperately perish, every man may,

nay must, undoubtedly thus conclude; '*Ergo*, God's love extends to me; it is his good-will and pleasure to have me saved amongst the rest, as well as any other; and whatsoever he unfeignedly wills, his power is able effectually to bring to pass.' The danger of sin and terror of that dreadful day being first made known unto our auditors, the pressing of these points as ef- 795
fectually as they might be (were this doctrine held for current) would kindle the love of God in our hearts, and inflame them with desires answerable to God's ardent will of our salvation; and these once kindled, would breed sure hope, and in a manner enforce us to embrace the infallible means thereto ordained.

14. Without admission of the former doctrine, it is impossible for any man rightly to measure the heinousness of his own or others' sins. Such as gather the infinity of sin's demerit from the infinite majesty against which it is committed, give us the surface of sin, infinite in length and breadth, but not in solidity. The will or pleasure of a prince in matters meanly affected by him, or in respect of which he is little more than indifferent, may be neglected without greater offence than meaner persons may justly take for foul indignities or grievous wrongs. But if a prince's sovereign command in a matter which he desired as much as his own life should be contemned, a loyal subject, conscious of such contempt, though happening through riot or persuasions of ill company, would in his sober thoughts be ready to take revenge upon himself, specially if he knew his sovereign's love or liking of him to be more than ordinary. Consider then, that as the majesty and goodness of our God, so his love and mercy towards us, is truly infinite; that he desires our repentance as earnestly as we can desire meat or drink in the extremity of thirst or hunger; as we

can do life itself while we are beset with death; that this our God, manifested in our flesh, did not desire his own life so much as our redemption. We must therefore measure the heinousness of our sins by the abundance of God's love, by the height and depth of our Saviour's humiliation; thus they will appear infinite, not only because committed against an infinite majesty, but because with this dimension they further include a wilful neglect of infinite mercy, and incomprehensible desires of our salvation. We are by nature the seed of rebels, which had lift their hands against the infinite goodness of their Creator, in taking the forbidden fruit, whereby they sought to be like him in majesty. Conscious of this transgression, the first actors immediately hid themselves from his presence; and, as if this their terror had imprinted a perpetual antipathy in their posterity, the least glimpse of his glory for many generations after made them cry out, *Alas! we shall die, because we have seen the Lord.* We still continue like the offspring of tame creatures grown wild, always eschewing his presence that seeks to recover us, as the bird doth the fowler, or the beasts of the forest the sight of fire. And yet unless he shelter us under the shadow of his wings, we are as a prey exposed to the destroyer, already condemned for fuel to the flames of hell, or as nutriment to the brood of serpents. To redeem us from this everlasting thraldom our God came down into the world disguised in the similitude of our flesh, made as a stale to allure us with wiles into his net, that he might draw us with *the cords of love.* The depth of Christ's humiliation was as great as the difference between God and the meanest man, therefore truly infinite. He that was equal with God was conversant with us here on earth in the form and condition of a servant[g].

[g] See book 8. ch. 6, 7, &c. [vol. vii. p. 420, &c.]

But of servants by birth, or civil constitution, many live in health and ease with sufficient supplies of all things necessary for this life; so did not the Son of God: his humanity was charged with all the miseries whereof mortality is capable, subject to hunger and thirst, to temptations, revilings, and scornings, even of his servants, an indignity which cannot befall slaves or vassals, either born or made so by men; or, to use the prophet's words, *he bare man's infirmities*, not spi- 796
ritually only, but bodily. For *who was weak, and he was not weak?* who was sick, and he whole? No malady of any disease cured by him, but was made his by exact and perfect sympathy. Lastly, *he bare our sins upon the cross*, and submitted himself to greater torments than any man in this life can suffer. And although these were as displeasant to his human nature as to ours, yet were our sins to him more displeasant. As he was loving to us in his death, so was he wise towards himself, and in submitting himself to this ignominious and cruel death, did of two evils choose the less; rather to suffer the punishment due to our sins, than to suffer sin still to reign in us, whom he loved more dearly than his own life. If then we shall continue in sin after manifestation of this his love, the heinousness of our offence is truly infinite, inasmuch as we do that continually which is more distasteful to our gracious God than any torments can be to us; so doing, we build up the works of Satan, which he came purposely to destroy. For of this I would not have you ignorant, that albeit the end of his death was to redeem sinners, yet the only means predestinated by him for our redemption is destruction of the works of Satan, and renovation of his Father's image in our souls. For us then to reedify the works of Satan, or abet his faction, is still more offensive to this

our God, than was his agony and bloody sweat. For taking a fuller measure of our sins, let us hereunto add his patient expectation of his enemies' conversion after his resurrection.

15. If the son of Zaleucus, before mentioned, should have pardoned any as deeply guilty as himself had been of that offence for which he lost one eye and his father another, the world would have taxed him either of injustice, folly, or too much facility, rather than commended him for true justice or clemency. But that we may know how far God's mercy doth overbear his majesty, he proceeds not straightway to execute vengeance upon these Jews which wreaked their malice upon his dear and only Son, who had committed nothing worthy of blame, much less of death. Here was matter of wrath and indignation so just as would have moved the most merciful man on earth to have taken speedy vengeance upon these spillers of innocent blood, specially the law of God permitting thus much. But God's mercy is above his law, above his justice; these did exact the very abolition of these sinners in the very first act of sin committed against God made man for their redemption. Yet he patiently expects their repentance which with unrelenting fury had plotted his destruction. *Forty years long had he been grieved with this generation* after the first passover celebrated in sign of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and for their stubbornness *he swore they should not enter into his rest.* And now their posterity, after a more glorious deliverance from the powers of darkness, have forty years allotted them for repentance before they be rooted out of the land of rest or promise. Yet hath not the Lord given them *hearts to perceive, eyes to see, or ears to hear unto this day, because seeing they would not see, and hearing they*

would not hear, but hardened their hearts against the spirit of grace. "Lord, give us what thou didst not give them, *hearts of flesh*, which may melt at thy threats; ears to hear the admonitions of our peace; and eyes to foresee the day of our visitation; that so, when thy wrath shall be revealed against sin and sinners, we may be sheltered from storms of fire and brimstone under the shadow of thy wings so long stretched out in mercy for us. Often, O Lord, wouldst thou have gathered us, and we would not; but let there be (we beseech thee) an end of our stubborn ingratitude towards thee, no end of thy mercies and lovingkindness towards us. Amen."

CHAP. XLVII. 797

HEBREWS IV. 12, 13.

For the Word of God *is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

1. If a mere artist (altogether unacquainted with the mysteries contained in scripture, or with the drift or scope of this epistle) should have dipt upon this text, he would have thought the author of it had intended some *copia verborum*, or poetical sylva of epithets, the words be so many and so ponderous[h]. And yet there be as many several propositions almost as there be words; and of all these propositions, or this weighty structure of words, the foundation or subject

[h] See a discourse upon this subject, [vol. x. p. 217.]

is but one, to wit, THE WORD OF GOD. About the attributes or epithets of this Word, though these be many, there is no difficulty or matter worthy of any disquisition which is not merely verbal or grammatical; the subject, though but one, admits, or rather requires many disquisitions, all truly theological, worthy the search or pains of a true divine.

The question, what word is here meant, *Verbum Domini*, or *Verbum Dominus*.

I must crave your patience for the discussing of one question, which is the principal, and is briefly this; What is here meant by *the Word of God*, whether *verbum Domini* only, "the word of God," as it was written long ago by the prophets and apostles, or as it is daily read and preached unto you? or *Verbum Dominus*, that "Word of God" which *in the beginning was with God*, and which *was God;* to wit, *the Son of God, by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made* that hath either making or beginning?

2. *Pontificii scriptores*, &c. The Roman writers (saith Paræus) upon the text contend, that by *the Word of God*, the Son of God, God blessed for ever, is here punctually meant. But by this good author's leave, I would be loath to grant the Romish church all those to be her children which stand for this interpretation; and more unwilling I am to make this any branch of controversy betwixt us and the Romish church; we have enough besides of far better use and consequence, even in Paræus's judgment; for he himself ingenuously confesseth, *nil mali continet in se hæc interpretatio;* "that this interpretation of Romish writers" (as he conceives all those to be who by *the word of God* here understand the Son of God) "doth contain no harm nor evil in it." And if it contain no evil in it, it will be no sin in itself, no wrong at all unto Paræus, or other modern writers contrary minded,

to inquire, whether it doth not contain some good in it; whether it be not the better interpretation of the two controversed, as well for profoundness of doctrine as for profitable use. The principal reason which moved Paræus and other modern writers not to subscribe unto the interpretation of men more ancient and orthodoxal, is, because our apostle nowhere before, nowhere after in this epistle, doth call the Son of God *the Word of God*. But this reason is a great deal too light to cast the scales for his opinion, supposing they were otherwise even; for the evangelist St. John, albeit he had oftener occasion to mention the Son of God in his Gospel than our apostle had to mention him in this epistle, doth nowhere (to my remembrance) instyle him *the Word of God* save only in the first chapter. And yet no orthodoxal Christian doubts whether St. John by *the Word, which in the beginning was with God, and was God*, did understand any other person or thing whatsoever besides the Son of God. And if our apostle in the text had some more special reason than he had in any other place of this epistle, before or after, to instyle the Son of God *the Word of God*, this will be enough at least to bring the scales to an equipoise; more than enough to counterpoise either Paræus' or other modern writers' opinion whom he did follow, or which follow him.

Paræus's reason why he denies it to be meant of *God the Word*. Yet doth St. John, 1 Ep. i. 1. call him, *The Word of Life*; and, Rev. xix. 13, *The Word of God*.

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3. We are then in the first place to prove, that *the Word of God* here in the text doth necessarily denote or import the Person of the Son of God.

Two points proposed.

In the second, to shew the reasons why the Son of God is called *the Word of God*, and what *the Word of God* in this place doth punctually import.

All the Israelites were delivered from the Egyptian thraldom by Moses; and all these Hebrews to whom

our apostle wrote, yea all mankind, were delivered from that bond of slavery which Satan had gotten over our first parents and us by right of conquest: for the Son of God by his conquest over Satan upon the cross did make us all the servants of God again *de jure*. That this first part of our redemption was universal, no man, which acknowledgeth Christ for his Lord and Redeemer, can deny. Again, our apostle St. Paul tells us, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, *that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.* And so had all these unto whom our apostle writes been baptized into Christ. Now our apostle in this place supposeth what St. Jude in his epistle takes as *a branch of that faith which was once delivered to the saints;* that however that inheritance which we hope for by Christ be much more glorious than the inheritance which God promised to the Israelites by Moses, yet God's promises unto us for entering into this glorious rest are subject to the same conditions and provisos which the promises made to the Israelites were for entering into the land of Canaan. Now many of them came short of those promises; and so our apostle takes as granted many of those Hebrews unto whom he wrote this epistle might fall further short of those glorious promises made unto them in Christ. All of them were, as all of us by baptism are, the sons of God, and heirs of promise; yet most of them, as most of us, *hæredes præsumpti, non hæredes apparentes,* heirs presumed or by adoption, not heirs apparent; that is, heirs disinheritable, or not irreversibly ordained unto eternal life. And from this ground our apostle takes occasion, and thought it necessary to press repentance so forcibly upon them; first by way of threatening, then by promise or

encouragement. By threatening, chap. iii. 12—15: *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; while it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* And after he had proposed the fearful example of their rebellious forefathers, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, he resumed his exhortation again, ch. iv. 1, 2: *Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them.* And again, ver. 11: *Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest,* (he means that 799
better rest which God had promised by Christ,) *lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief* or disobedience.

4. But what if they, or any of us, fall after the same example; their case or ours is much worse than the case of those rebellious Israelites was; worse, in respect of the undoubted discovery of our backsliding, how secret soever that be; and worse again in respect of the doom or sentence which must pass upon the discovery of our backsliding. All this is implied in our apostle's conclusion of his exhortation or threatening caveat here in my text—*For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword,* &c. So that there is the same antithesis or opposition, or rather the same difference of proportion between the voice of God, unto which the Israelites would not hearken, and *the Word of God* here in my text, from whom these Hebrews were almost ready

to revolt, as is between Moses and Christ, as is between the land of Canaan and the kingdom of heaven; and who or what then can we imagine this *Word of God* to be? We read sometimes, that the voice of God is a *terrible*, a *glorious voice*, a *voice mighty in operation;* but that, I take it, was not the voice to which the Israelites would not hearken; for that voice, so often as God speaks by it, will make men hear and fear whether they will or no. But neither that voice, nor the voice which called to Moses from the mercy-seat, nor the voice of God which did daily call unto the Israelites by Moses and the prophets, are any where in scripture displayed or emblazoned in such propriety of words as import a living substance endowed with life and sense, with power of disquisition and of judicature; the perfection of all which properties is attributed to this *Word of God* here in my text. There is no one attribute in this whole catalogue which doth not bear a lively character of majesty, of glory, of power and wisdom so truly divine, that it cannot befit any mere creature; none but him alone, who is *the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person.* No living substance, no living person is able to sustain or undergo all these glorious attributes, save he alone *who upholdeth all things by the word of his power;* which is the very character of the eternal Son of God, Heb. i. 2. Unto the eyes of this *Word* every creature, that is, even the most hidden secrets of the heart of man, the thoughts of angels, are most clear and conspicuous. Whence, if by the *Word of God* in this place we understand any thing in the world besides *him by whom the world was made;* be it the voice of God which the psalmist describeth to be mighty in operation; be it the voice of God which the Israelites heard in the mount when

they saw no image; be it the voice which called to Moses from the mercyseat; or be it the word of God as by the instructions of this voice it was written by Moses, by the prophets, or evangelists; or be it the word of God in general, as it was preached by them, or by the ministers of the gospel; it can be but a creature; and being a creature it is discerned by the eyes of *this Word* here in my text, which can be no other than that *Word of God* by whom all our writings, all our preaching, all our actions and secret thoughts must be examined; by whom the persons of men and angels, of the prophets and apostles themselves must one day be judged. I dare boldly affirm, there is no one passage of sacred writ, whether in the Old or New Testament, of equal length, which hath so many pathetical and lively expressions of divine power and wisdom as these two verses in my text have; and shall we yet doubt whether they be literally, directly, and punctually meant of any but of God himself, or of the godhead itself, save only in that Person unto whom all power of judicature is given in heaven and earth. 800 And this is the proper character of the Son of God; for as he himself tells us, John v. 22, *the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.*

5. Some late writers notwithstanding there be which doubt, whether by *the Word of God* in the text the Son of God be punctually meant, who yet grant, that those attributes, ver. 13—*Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*—can be meant of none but of the Son of God, and the ever living Judge of quick and dead.

But this interpretation doth contradict itself, doth

divide and separate those things which the Spirit of God hath conjoined; and if it were true, would rend asunder the very subject of all the propositions in my text, which is indivisibly one; it cannot abide the touch or test of any logic, unless it be of his logic who opposeth invention unto judgment, unto whose followers nothing more usual than to turn the greatest mysteries in divinity into bare metaphors or rhetorical tropes; nothing more familiar, than to interpret those prophetical passages by which the Holy Ghost doth delineate the incarnation of *the Word* to be meant of God only ἀνθρωποπαθῶς, in a common vulgar, not in any mystical sense; as if they were afraid to grant, that the human eyes, the human ears, the human words of Christ, were truly and properly the eyes, the ears, and words of God himself.

An objection. But it will be objected, that St. John did call the Son of God ὁ Λόγος, *the Word*, (without addition,) but he did not call him *the Word of God*. Whence it will further be demanded, whether we have any hint or warrant to understand the Son of God by *the Word of God?* or whether this be any peculiar character or expression of his Person, as he is the Searcher of all hearts, the supreme Judge of men and angels?

Answer. This objection is fully answered, and the demand upon it clearly satisfied by St. John, though not in his Gospel, yet in the nineteenth chapter of his Revelation, ver. 11—15. In which places, whatsoever is here said of *the Word of God* in my text, in a direct assertive sense, is delivered by St. John either in words directly affirmative, or by way of emblem or character: *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make*

war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself, &c. And seeing this name is ineffable, and only known unto himself, it would be a presumptuous vanity to inquire further after it, or seek to express it. But he further adds; *His name is called, The* WORD OF GOD.—*And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations—And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written,* KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS, ver. 16. All these are names and titles of one and the same Person, and of that Person alone who is the Judge of the quick and the dead, that is, of the Son of God, who is *God blessed for ever*. The same antithesis, or rather excess of difference between *the voice* of God and *the Word* of God, which our apostle makes in this fourth chapter of this epistle, was made unto his hand, Isaiah xl. 6, 7, 8: *The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field—surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the* Word *of our God shall stand for ever.*

801 The second point, Why Christ is called *The Word*, or *The Word of God.*

6. But the time calls me to the second branch proposed—why the Son of God is sometime instyled ὁ Λόγος, *The Word*; sometimes, ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, *The Word of God.*

And concerning this question there is greater variety than diversity, or greater diversity than discord of opinions. And it would be easy to accord the several opinions, (could their abettors be restrained from breathing the spirit of contention into them, without any appearance of contradiction betwixt them,) if we might take their words as they distil from their harmless pens.

1. Opinion, because he is the scope of all the written word.

Of learned interpreters, some are zealous that the Son of God is therefore called *The Word*, or *The Word of God*, because he is the end and scope of the whole written word, whether by Moses or by the prophets, or by other sacred historians of the Old Testament. And this opinion we dare not utterly condemn as altogether false, because it is so consonant to the voice of the Son of God himself, and to the apostles; for so he himself tells us, that Moses wrote of him, and so plentifully of him, *that if the Jews* had *believed Moses, they had believed him.* John v. 46. *And unto him* (as the apostle avoucheth) *all the prophets give testimony.* And in this respect alone, though there were no other, he might be truly instyled ὁ Λόγος, *The Word of God, Verbum Domini,* or, as some will have it, *Sermo Dei*, "The Speech of God."

2. Opinion, in reference to his eternal generation.

But whilst such as too much adhere to this interpretation condemn others, or restrain the reasons why he is called *the Word of God* wholly to this respect alone, they do but nurse contention about words. For many others, more ancient and as learned, earnestly contend, that the Son of God is called *the Word* with peculiar reference to his eternal generation, or as he is *internum Verbum mentis divinæ*, "the internal Word of his eternal Father." For so we ourselves distinguish betwixt words uttered and conceived only, or between our speeches and internal thoughts or cogitations: these we call *conceptus mentis.* And this interpretation, if the authors or abettors of it did not exclude all others, would be as consonant to scriptures as the former, and is indeed the joint opinion of orthodoxal antiquity. The truth is, that the Greek ὁ Λόγος is not capacious enough of all that is contained in the Hebrew *Dabar.* Nor is the Latin, either *Verbum* or *Sermo*, or both, sufficient to contain all that is im-

ported in the Greek ὁ Λόγος. But as the greatest vessel, which hath no one of the same kind capacious enough to hold all that is contained in it, may, without shedding or waste, be drawn out into a number of less vessels; so may the Greek ὁ Λόγος be fully (at least competently) expressed by two or three Latin words more besides *Verbum* or *Sermo*. For over and above these, it imports sometimes *a definition*, or *an ideal rule* or *pattern;* and according to this importance (not excluding the two former) we are to understand that of St. John i. 1. 3: Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* How then were all things made by the Word? This he only knows in particular; but thus much we know in general; the Father made all things by him, not as by any manual workman, (as the house which the architect conceives is built by masons and other labourers,) but *made by him*, as by the express image of his Father, or, as he is, the ideal rule or pattern of all things which the Father made: or, all things were *made by the Son*, after such a manner, (but incomparably more excellent,) as if we would imagine a curious architect could erect a stately palace in a moment without the help of any hand-802 labourer, only by casting or contemplating the idea or model of it in his own brain.

Λόγος imports *a definition.*

7. Again; ὁ Λόγος imports as much as the Latin *ratio*. And this signification or expression of it is no way opposite, rather coordinate to all the former. And thus Justin Martyr with other ancients express the meaning of St. John i. 1. As if he had said, *In principio erat ratio*, "In the beginning was the rule" or "reason" of all things. Unto all these we may add

Justin Martyr expresses Λόγος by *ratio.*

another importance of the same word which squares well with all the rest. For *ratio* in Latin sometimes imports more than can be expressed by our English *rule* or *reason*. For *rationem reddere* is more than to *give a reason;* it is as much (in English) as *to render an account*. And in this sense it is fully equivalent to the Greek τὴν ἀπολογίαν ἀποδιδόναι, which is the very phrase used by Athanasius in his Creed, καὶ ἀποδώσουσιν ἐξ ἰδίων ἔργων τὴν ἀπολογίαν, *And shall* GIVE ACCOUNT *for their own works*. This phrase or expression of his belief he took from our apostle, Rom. xiv. 12: *Every one of us shall give account of himself to God*. Now Christ is God; and this account we are to give to him as he is ὁ λόγος τῶν λόγων, *the ever-living, all-knowing Rule of that final account which men and angels must give to God* for all their works, for all their sayings, for all their thoughts; and according to this signification or importance, the four former importances not excluded, but presupposed, the word ὁ Λόγος in my text is chiefly and most punctually to be understood. For however by *the Word of God* we must understand only the Son of God, to whom alone these glorious attributes can be ascribed; yet our apostle's expression of that which he here intended is more full, and more punctually emphatical by much, than if he had said, *The Son of God is quick and powerful in operation*, &c. For his purpose was to display the attributes of the Son of God, not only as he is the supreme Judge of quick and dead, but as he is the everliving Rule by which all our actions must be examined, by which all accounts must either be approved or disallowed. He is a Rule, endowed with the perpetual sight and sense of a witness; with incessant activity of an accuser or solicitor; with the life and spirit of a judge, yea, justice

itself armed with power. All that can be required to the conviction, to the condemnation, or absolution of all men, are in him according to their utmost perfections, in that he is ὁ Λόγος ζῶν, a *living Rule*. He is perpetually able to give the charge home and full, for whatsoever men and angels are to account, for every idle word and thought, for such things as the parties' accountants cannot think of. In that he is ὁ Λόγος ζῶν καὶ ἐνεργὴς, a *living* and a *powerful Rule*, he is able to exact all arrearages of such as do not sincerely acknowledge them, and crave pardon for them, to the utmost farthing; able to sentence ungracious servants (which have been unfaithful unto him, and cruel unto their fellow-servants) unto everlasting imprisonment, without the assistance of a jailer, or other executioner of justice: he is the all-seeing eye and almighty hand of justice itself.

8. Thus much of the meaning or full importance of the word ὁ Λόγος here in the beginning of my text; but we meet with the same word again in the conclusion of it. And if you will have the subject of all the propositions in my text, which (as I told you before) some modern interpreters have rent asunder, (by making an hiatus or chink between the 12th and 13th verses,) we must put the two first words and the four last together. And so the expression will appear to be not only more full, and a great deal more elegant in the original, than it is in the ordinary Latin, or than I know how to make it in our English; as thus, ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, πρὸς ὃν ἡμῖν ὁ Λόγος, ζῶν ἐστι, &c.

About translating the original in the last words of 803
my text, there is some diversity amongst interpreters. The vulgar Latin, which the Romish writers are bound to follow, translate the last words thus; *Ad*

quem nobis est Sermo; that is, as they would express the Hebraism, *de quo loquimur*, "of whom we speak;" but much amiss, and far from the meaning of the original. Beza much better; *cui nobiscum est negotium.* To the same effect our English doth, *with whom we have to do.* But the ancient Gloss much better than both; *cui a nobis reddenda est ratio*, "to whom we are to render an account." This indeed is the main business which we have to do with the Son of God, or he with us. And so the Syriac renders it, save only that he puts it in the third person plural, *to whom men must give an account;* which words, according to the propriety of that tongue, (and of the Hebrew,) may be taken impersonally, *to whom account must be given.* And this interpretation I find warranted by the authority of St. Chrysostom and Theophylact, two of the best expressers of the original or Greek dialect. And thus the original will run clear without any hiatus or interruption either in the subject or foundation, or in the structure of the attributes or several propositions.

9. According to this importance of the Greek ὁ Λόγος, the breastplate (the first of Aaron's holy garments, made for glory and for beauty, wherein the high priest did bear the names and the judgments of the sons of Israel, and wherein the Urim and Thummim were set) was called in Greek λόγιον, or τὸ λογεῖον; the meaning of which is better expressed by the Latin *rationale* than I know how to render either of them in English; but so called it was with reference to the Son of God, as he is ὁ Λόγος in the abstract; as he is Life itself and Light itself, not carrying spectacles on his breast, as the high priest did.

All the knowledge or light of discovering secrets, which came by the breastplate, or *rationale*, or by

Urim or Thummim, when it was in its prime use, was but a glimmering type or shadow of this ὁ Λόγος, *Ratio*, or *Verbum Dei*, "the Word of God," to whose sight and inspection the most secret thoughts which lurk in the centre of man's heart, the very temper and constitution of our souls, are more perspicuous and clear than the inward parts of the sacrifices were to legal priests, after they had divided them joint from joint, and broken them up. For unto this dissection or anatomy of legal sacrifices our apostle alludes in this description of the Son of God, specially in those words, Πάντα δὲ γυμνὰ καὶ τετραχηλισμένα τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ, *All things are open and naked unto his eyes.*

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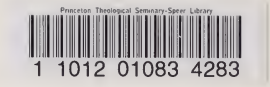
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